

MONTHLY REPOSITORY.

NEW SERIES, No. LXIII.

MARCH, 1832.

THE FAST DAY AND THE CHOLERA.

IT requires no spirit of prophecy to foretell how the Fast Day, which has been appointed for the twenty-first of this month, will be observed. We can, without presumption, become its historians by anticipation. We lay no claim to second sight, nor have we any revelations to make in an unknown tongue. It is not altogether that 'the sunset of life gives us mystical lore ;' but the sun, or perhaps rather the moon of fasting is deep in its decline, and so, 'coming events cast their shadows before.' Our prefigurations make no pretensions to divinity, or even to magnificence. We see not, in our visions, a puissant and devout nation kneeling in singleness of heart before its own undivided altar, its plumed head bowing to the dust, and the trust of its heart ascending, like the unbroken and aspiring flame of a sacrifice, to heaven. There can be nothing like this in the harsh, vulgar, and discordant reality which is soon to be presented to our senses. The fast day will come, and people will leave off working, but nobody will abstain from eating, save those whom poverty compels to keep perennial fast. Even from them, it may be presumed, charity will not withhold the soup which is distributed the more vigorously in the hope that it may help to keep the cholera from the neighbourhood. The theatres will be closed, the churches will be open, and the shops will manage their shutters so as to hit the happy medium. Amongst the higher classes, a handsome dish of salt fish, at the head of the well-spread table, by way of addition not of substitution, will suffice to mark the day decorously. Our statesmen and senators will be in conclave, using their brief breathing time to arrange the tactics of the next week's debate, and plan how the next party blow is to be struck or parried. At the other extreme, some of the ragged radicals of the Rotunda may be heartily eating their subscription dinner, with ominous consistency still showing their opposition to things as they are, by proceedings not unattended with danger about the throat. The steam-boats will feed, as usual, the huge mouths of their engines ; and digest the collation by rapid motion up the river and down the river, with

their cargoes of liberated clerks, who thus keep holiday. There will be walking, and riding, and tea-drinking, and ruralizing, in spite of March winds; and London will look as gay as on the evening of the day when it mourned at the funeral of George the Fourth, the father of his people, or at that of George the Third, the father of his people before him. And many there will be who will think that a fast day, appointed by government, is a serious and sedate thing, and to be entertained with a sedate and serious countenance, especially on account of the children, and the servants, and the poor people in the neighbourhood; and they will go once to church to set them all a good example. And the orthodox dissenters, having had their fast beforehand, and being just now zealous for dissent, will keep the day with a proviso, as some marry with a protest, seizing it merely as a preaching opportunity. And some churchmen will keep the day in the spirit of superstition, thinking to placate an angry Deity by prayer and ceremony; and others will observe it in the spirit of a fierce fanaticism, vituperating whatever there is in the country of liberality, benevolence, and enjoyment. Such, practically, will the fast day be, with the great majority of the nation; and the government, by which the day has been appointed, cannot, if it would, make it otherwise.

The government, then, as to such a purpose as this, is utterly impotent. It cannot enforce a national fast in any sense of the word which is borne out by a theological dictionary. It can only command a partial cessation of business, and the partial use of certain forms of words purporting to be prayers. The circumstance is one indication, amongst many, of a fact which we have before endeavoured to illustrate, and which is characteristic of the present time: that we are in a transition state, from one form of society to another, and lack that unity between government and people which is requisite for all great national purposes. In homely phrase, we do not, and in the present state of things we cannot, all pull together. When rulers act, the people are not seconding, but jealously watching, their efforts. When rulers preach, the people laugh. When there is profession on the one part, there is suspicion on the other. The form of authority stalks about with a dark sullenness for its shadow; and every threatening has an echo. There is but little of that which should be universal, mutual confidence and co-operation. Even our democratic politicians trust in a system of checks and counterpoises; power always on the change, and suspicion always on the alert. And so it must be, and nothing better than this nice balancing can we have, till the rulers and the ruled are as one. When that which represents the head, in a state, is like the head of the body, the national organ of intelligence and volition, then shall we possess the unity which is power. Let the community perceive that the agency of its institutions is to throw the direc-

tion of its affairs into the hands of those who are gifted with the highest intelligence and the purest benevolence, and they will, with the obedience and accordance of the members of a healthful body, follow the impulses of head and heart. Did we all feel that our rulers stood in this comparative position towards us, the fast which they enjoin, were such rulers to enjoin one, would be observed generally and devoutly. And, as is most probable, did they enjoin something else in preference, that would be fulfilled with the alacrity of hearty concurrence and confidence. When a patriarch of old, the priest and king of his populous household, commanded fast or sacrifice, his children and his slaves fasted or sacrificed devoutly. Had Moses commanded an extraordinary fast in the wilderness, the Israelites would not have taken advantage of a leisure day to make pic-nic parties adown the dells or up the pinnacles of Horeb. When the polytheism of Rome was in its palmy state, before the philosophy of Greece had eaten out its heart, leaving only the external shell, and while augur could look augur in the face without laughing, consuls and pontifices were paramount over the public mind, and at their bidding it would humble itself before the altars of their gods. Nor less might had he of papal Rome, while yet he sat in God's temple, like a god, the living law of Christendom. Even the laird of a Scottish clan had power over the stomachs, knees, and thoughts of his clansmen. All could do that, which the government of the most popular monarch of the British empire, with all its machinery of ministers of state, of justice, and of religion, cannot do; and in attempting which it only whistles to the wind. The reason is plain. Those authorities, whatever their imperfections, were in harmony with the communities over which they presided; they were felt to represent the opinions, desires, interests, of those communities; to be qualified for ruling by superior wisdom and goodness, (as wisdom and goodness were then estimated,) and so in what they did the community they ruled went with them. So it must be again. This harmony must return. Not by the return of patriarchal or despotic authority. The world has outgrown them for ever. Not by outward uniformity of religious profession and ceremony; the time for that has gone by too; but by institutions which throw up into the government of the state men whom all confide in as the best qualified. America approximates towards this condition. Congress has far more power than parliament; more power over people's minds. It carries opinion with it more surely. Its recommendation, if issued without penal sanction, would meet with more respect. The Reform Bill will help us to approximate towards this condition. In that tendency consists its worth. If well followed up, there will be a subsiding of the wars of factions and classes. We shall advance towards national unity. We shall begin to contemplate a distinct social aim in our proceedings, and direct them towards such forms as all

will acknowledge to produce the legislation of wisdom, and the government of affection. Meantime there is much to be done; there are many lessons to be learned; and amongst them is the expediency of dropping quietly whatever the past has left us which is unfit for present use, and ceasing to order national fasts when the nation has ceased to have faith in fasts.

The moral feebleness of the government is apparent not only in the inefficiency of the command, but in the influence by which its promulgation has been forced upon them. We do not mean that any other administration would have had more moral strength, or so much; the weakness to which we refer arises from the present state of society, and the want of a sufficient and appropriate accommodation in our institutions to the progress which society has made. Such weakness is inherent in all attempts to rule the present by those forms of the past which increased intelligence has rendered obsolete. Who believes that men of such minds as Lords Brougham, Grey, and Althorp, really expect to check the progress of the cholera by a public fast? Who imagines that the physicians have faith in their own prescription? We say nothing of opinions which those individuals or other members of the government may have at any time avowed; we say nothing of the rationality or irrationality of the notion of the efficacy of fasting; we look simply at the modern political history of Sunday. We look at those cabinet dinners, and privy council meetings, which Monday's newspaper records, week after week, in almost unbroken succession. Be they right or wrong in those meetings and dinings, these are not the men to attempt the creation for the country of a fifty-third Sabbath in the year eighteen hundred and thirty-two. They are clearly not acting on their own views and feelings. After Lord Althorp's denial, we will not say that no fast would have been proclaimed but for Mr. Perceval's motion, but we do believe that it would never have been contemplated save in deference to the theological faction of which he is the organ. We do believe it to have originated in a desire to deprecate their hostility, or to conciliate their support, or at least to purchase their neutrality. The nation neither wanted, wished, nor will observe it, (as a proper fast, that is,) but a party of enthusiasts were craving for it, and they have carried their point. So it continually happens in this country. We are not *one people*, but a collection of little bands, united amongst themselves by a peculiar interest or opinion, and each waging a sort of predatory warfare against the whole. The ultra-Evangelical Church cohort will now inscribe NATIONAL FAST upon its banners, as those of a regiment of the line bear the inscription of 'Alexandria' or 'Talavera.' They think they have done something for the Deity. They have gained a victory for his glory over the liberalism and infidelity of the age. Truly that must be a feeble government which they have mastered, or which stoops to placate their vio-

lence ; and that must be a precious party of which Mr. Perceval is the leader. His effusions are unrivalled by those of any other man who is allowed to be at large. His theology is only equalled by his oratory. He presided at the formation of the Trinitarian Bible Society on the 7th of December last, and described it as a 'meeting in the face of the great tide of the day.' Moreover he affirmed with confidence, 'having known what it is to be on the right, and to be on the left hand side of that question,' 'that that spirit of liberalism is a subtle snare of Satan.' He announced, on the same occasion, how 'it had pleased God, in his infinite mercy to him, to make him willing to propose to the Commons House of Parliament' that they should address the King to proclaim this same fast. He derived his encouragement to this attempt from the fact that the 'cities of the plain destroyed with Sodom were ten,' of which Lot prayed that 'one might be spared to his infirmity,' and the 'kingdoms of Christendom, as shown in the Apocalypse, are ten,' of which he hopes to be the Lot, and have one, we suppose, 'spared to his infirmity.' Another motive which, as he mentioned in the House of Commons, moved him to move for a fast, was that the nation, (in his vocabulary,) and the oligarchy, in our vocabulary, had, in its infinite prodigality of the people's money, made him a pensioner. He is one of the lilies of corruption's field, which toil not, neither do they spin, though we cannot say much about his eclipsing Solomon in all his glory. This pension was bestowed upon him for his father's services : he being the son of the most pragmatical minister that ever mis-governed this country ; and who fell by the hand of an assassin, in mistake,—having been saved by his conscience, we hope, not less than by his littleness of mind, from any such great and glaring crime as could bring down the arm of vengeance upon him on his own account. Amongst other payments on the same score, the half-starving people pay this his son 1500*l.* a-year, that he may dine comfortably every day, and his religion impels him to repay them by consecrating a day on which they shall please heaven by not dining at all. How long in arrear of its intelligence must the institutions of the country be, when such a man as this can be sent to parliament, to expel the reporters from the gallery, and read Deuteronomy to the benches ! The report of the meeting to which we have referred, and other documents in our possession, would enable us to give some curious proofs of the ignorance, intolerance, fanaticism, turbulence, and virulence of the faction which he represents. We spare our readers the useless disgust ; if they want to know more, let them read the 'Record' newspaper. To be hectored by any thing that could come out of such mouths, into proclaiming that for one day the people should not put any thing into their mouths, is surely a misplaced attempt at conciliation. The present ministry is too much addicted to this ; they too often ask, what will Mrs. Grundy

say? and should study the good old fable of the old man, his son, and the ass. They have tried in vain to stand well with a tory clergy and a tory peerage, and they may try as vainly to stand well with those who cant and those who rant. They can only build up a permanent and useful authority on the basis of public approval and enlightened principle. They should make no compromise with factions, aristocratical, political, commercial, or theological. They should aim at ruling for the nation and by the nation. They will then grasp the true rod of Aaron, which will bud and blossom for ages after it has swallowed up all these little vipers.

It is astonishing that so much ignorance and superstition should yet survive in the notions which, to a certain extent, pass current amongst us, concerning the operations of Providence, and the efficacy of ceremony. It is clear, that whatever be the law or means of its progress, the cholera has hitherto advanced in a direction which can be indicated, and, we may almost add, at a rate which can be calculated. It neither visits a sinning country by miracle, nor avoids or leaves a praying country by miracle. It obeys the fixed laws of physical existence. We know that those laws are only the uniform operations of Providence: hence every suffering is providential infliction, as every blessing is providential bounty. For this very reason, it is not piety but superstition which associates Providence peculiarly with the spread of this disease. It is either superstition or cant which takes such an opportunity of introducing Providence into the preamble of an act of parliament—cant, perhaps, in the legislature, by way of compliment to superstition out of the legislature; for we can scarcely ascribe superstition to the present Bishop of London, and still less to the late editor of the Edinburgh Review. The Lord Advocate is not perhaps to be held personally responsible; for it seems that he had been specially informed that the cholera was the work of Providence, by the concurrent testimony of all the letters written to him from Scotland on that subject. The Bishop of London pleaded precedent,—it having been enacted that the fire of London and the illness of George the Third were by Divine Providence. This was an unhappy pair of precedents for his pious preamble, as the great fire turned out a great blessing to the metropolis, and the king's illness, if a judicial calamity at all, could only be so upon himself.

There is something worse than inconsistency in such phraseology. It not only misrepresents the mode of operation, and virtually denies the universality of Divine Providence, but it also misrepresents the moral qualities, and virtually denies the universal benignity of the divine character. There is not only the mischief of selecting from the mingled mass of what is painful and what is pleasurable, that which is pre-eminently painful, in order to connect it peculiarly with the notion of Providence, but

there is the yet further and deeper mischief of intimating that it is retributory and vindictive infliction.

But on this point we have already animadverted. (p. 48.) Cholera is not more closely connected with crime than with calamity. It attacks those who drink, but it spares not those who only starve. It seizes alike on the constitution which vicious indulgences have shattered, and on that which virtuous privations have enfeebled. There is but one way in which vice is punished by Providence here, and that is by the sufferings, physical or mental, which are its natural consequences. Of these, cholera may be an incidental aggravation, but certainly with no such precision as to entitle it to be selected and proclaimed as a divine punishment. Its career over the earth has evidently been guided by some other than a retributory principle, and by one which is not moral but physical. The highest estimate, then, which can be entertained of the efficacy of prayer and fasting, does not authorize any anticipation of their arresting its progress. Sinful enough we are, but that sin is aggravated, though professedly repented of, when we talk of the wrath and indignation of our heavenly Father in connexion with one of the results of those physical laws which are the operations of his unfathomable wisdom and unbounded love.

The efficacy of prayer is not in changing the course of nature. Since the age of miracles its force has been never physical but moral, it is the devout expression of our wishes, but can never effect the accomplishment of our wishes if they be inconsistent with those laws of nature which are the will of God. It may heal the wounded spirit, but not the maimed body. It may purify the heart, but not the atmosphere. In its province it is mighty, beyond that it is powerless. The slow and clumsy machinery of the church has worked so as to furnish a strange exhibition of the futility of its forms. Prayers were issued by authority that the supposed plague might not reach our shores, and these having been read in the northern towns, through its rise, prevalence, and decline there, are followed by others, in which, after having so long prayed that the disease, which was come, might be kept away, they now humble themselves on account of its arriving, when from them it has already gone. This is one of the frequently occurring absurdities of prescribed devotions. Thus it is, that a state religion attempts to avail itself of the supposed efficacy of prayer. In what the efficacy of fasting is presumed to consist, we cannot tell. The Lord Chancellor has sorely misled Lord Londonderry if fasting have any physical power in the prevention of cholera. Fasting is the natural consequence of grief, and, therefore, in early ages and eastern countries, men endeavoured to express and to produce mental sorrow and abasement by abstinence from food. False and superstitious religions have generally abounded in fastings. They have been

little countenanced by true religion. There is the example of the pharisees indeed; but their fastings were traditional and not legal. Moses ordained one day of fasting in the year, and thirty days of feasting. And the dispensation which he founded was ceremonial, temporary, and introductory. Christianity proclaimed no fast. No precept of the New Testament can be appealed to. If there be efficacy in such an observance it is not derived from a divine promise, but must be demonstrated by human experience. And how stands our experience just now? The Scotch first resolved to fast, and immediately the cholera came upon them. The Presbytery determined not to wait for the general fast, but to anticipate it, and yet the cholera went on spreading. They held their fast, but the cholera did not part from them, and has not been banished from their country. In London, if cause and effect are to be argued from sequence, the proclamation attracted the cholera; the congregational fast verified its existence in Rotherhithe; and the observance of the national fast may be expected to extend it over the whole metropolis. This is sorry encouragement. It should make our statesmen and theologians suspect that they do not exactly understand, or correctly represent the principles on which Providence governs the world. It is sad enough to see a people heartily united in the faith of an angry and changeful Deity, interrupting vindictively his own wise laws; and in the practice of forms, ceremonies, and fastings, which are presumed to be potential: but it is worse to see the language which belongs to such notions, solemnly employed in legislation by men who know better, to a nation which knows better, in deference to a little band of bustling bigots.

Almost every day brings fresh evidence, which has long passed the point at which it ought to be convincing, that on no rational principle can the cholera be selected for the bad eminence to which it is raised by the proclamation for a fast. If we must fast for a disease, why not for consumption, which destroyed almost 5,000 persons in London during the last year? This is the same proportion to the population within the bills of mortality (760,000), that the number of fatal cases (about 300) of cholera in Newcastle is to 42,760, the population of that town. When we remember that many of these cases were probably doubtful, and that the returns of deaths ascribed to cholera have never showed a proportionate, but usually a comparatively small, increase in the total of deaths, we shall not hesitate to regard consumption as the worst plague of the two. The average mortality of infants in London is yet larger. Why should it not be projected to redeem by fasting the lives of children from an angry Deity? Various diseases have, at different times, as may be seen by Mr. Marshall's most important work on the mortality of the metropolis, been more devastating than this; which after all will, we have little doubt, be ascertained to be only an old disease under a

new name ; its symptoms aggravated perhaps by some temporary causes into unusual virulence. We have greater evils than this in the land for which to fast, would fastings avail to heal them. Had we such faith, we would fast for the prolonged anxiety of the country, with all its attendant mischiefs, by the delay of the Reform Bill. We would fast for the sanguinary character of our penal code. We would fast for the ignorance, wretchedness, and crime, which are perpetuated in the land, by the inefficiency of our institutions for the great ends of human society. The very panic which has been fostered is already, by its influences on trade and commerce, generating far more suffering than ever the cholera is likely to produce. Oh, there will be fasting enough ! In the distress, which will have been, we fear, so unwisely aggravated, may God have mercy on our country by stirring up all men of sound minds and hearts to labour unremittingly for the immediate and enduring amelioration of the condition of the great mass of the community.

Let Percevals give up their sinecures, and Gordons learn the language of charity ; let bishops look for gospel, and not parliamentary, precedents ; and statesmen renounce cajolery and compromise ; let legislation become the expression of a people's will for the promotion of a people's good ; let knowledge be untaxed and religionists be neither bribed nor plundered ; let devotion be left to the spontaneity of men's hearts and voices ; let monopoly be disarmed of its iron rod, and labour freed from its shackles ; and let the middle classes awake from their apathy, before they are crushed between the higher and the lower, whom it is their hitherto neglected mission to conciliate, blend, harmonize, and ultimately identify : and then, from worse plagues than cholera, and by better means than fasting, will the deliverance of the country be achieved. This is the best mode of evincing our own faith, piety, and righteousness, and securing for earth the mercy and favour of heaven. Our noblest recognition of Divine Providence is made by observing the laws of physical, mental, moral, and social being ; and by so availing ourselves of those laws, as to extend the knowledge, develop the capacity, purify the characters, multiply the enjoyments, and elevate the hopes of our fellow-creatures.

LIESE; OR, THE PROGRESS OF WORSHIP.**A TALE.**

On a mountain steep, near the sources of the Maine, stood a convent whose vesper bell had echoed from summit to summit for four hundred years. The old men in the dwellings of the valley below delivered to the little ones about their knees, the traditions they had received from their grandfathers respecting the original

consecration of the chapel of this convent and the arrival of the relics which crowned its sanctity. The Reformation having begun, the time was now at hand when the glory of the place must pass away. The magistracy of Nuremberg, having abolished the mass and broken up all monastic associations in their city, extended their decrees through all the districts around. Unwelcome messengers had appeared at the gates of every convent to announce the day when its inmates must depart, and its possessions be given into the hand of the civil power. By this summons the quiet of every monastic abode was instantaneously broken up. The superiors, inwardly mourning over the necessity which they must obey, strove in vain to preserve their authority during the few days which yet remained. The spiritual fathers observed no bounds in their revilings of the heretic by whose infernal agency the half of the world had been drawn over from Christ to Satan, and the rulers of the earth become empowered to scatter abroad the defenceless sheep who had till now been guarded by shepherds so faithful as themselves. Among the flocks thus mourned over, a tumultuous variety of emotions contended for predominance. Dim remembrances of the distant world in some ; vivid recollections in others : in some, a horror of the turmoil of life which must now be encountered ; in others, transports mingled with awe in the prospect of restoration to society : and in all, eager curiosity respecting the progress of the religious feuds whose effects they were now feeling, and respecting him in whom these feuds originated.

Towards sunset, one evening in the beginning of March, 1522, Liese, one of the sisterhood of the convent before mentioned, sat by the window of her cell to watch, for the last time, the approach of twilight over those mountains which had been the companions of her meditations for twelve years. Hither had she retired in her twentieth year, not from an impulse of enthusiastic devotion, nor in obedience to a family decree ; but, wrung by disappointment, with the hope of finding a sanctuary where new griefs could not reach her, however impossible it might be for any power in earth or heaven to prevent the ghosts of former emotions from haunting her. She had found more than she looked for. Here the floods which overwhelmed her spirit drew off into a natural channel, and a deep and calm flow of devotion sustained her. Here she had long supposed that she should spend the remainder of her days, and had therefore attached herself in a spirit of content to every thing around her, contemplating no further change than was from time to time wrought by the woodman's axe in the woods beneath her eye, or by the chances of mortality within the convent walls. On this last evening she lamented the confidence which had prevented her preparing herself for the encounter with society which she must again undergo. Her survey of the past presented nothing but melancholy, her anticipation of the future

nothing but fearful images ; and the objects on which her eye and ear loved commonly to dwell, now only nourished her sorrow. As she saw the herdsman following his kine down the valley, she had no benevolent thoughts to bestow on the wife and children who awaited him at his door. As she heard the horn of the hunter or the song of the forester from under the shadows of the woods, she did not look with her wonted complacency on joys which she believed to be far inferior to those of the privileged state in which she had lived till now, and which she had hitherto regarded in somewhat the same manner as the philosopher watches the first flight of a brood of nestlings, or the gambols of lambs among the furrows. She had now no leisure for the recreation of benevolent sympathies. Finding her individual lot involved in the revolution then taking place in the spiritual world of man, she gave herself up to amazement and grief that such a revolution should have been permitted : that the church of Christ and St. Peter should have been shaken to its very foundation, and that she, and hundreds as harmless as herself, should be driven from their retreats by the shock.

‘ He does all things well,’ thought she, ‘ and therefore doubtless some mighty victory over the powers of hell is in preparation, of which their present portentous triumphs will but enhance the glory. But why, O why, is this daring heretic permitted to elude the arm of the church ? Why are the decrees of the Holy See of no avail against him ? And above all, why is he suffered to drag the innocent, the pious, down into the same destruction with the blasphemer ? How many are there now within these walls who, but for him, might have lived holy and died assured of salvation, in whom vanity is already beginning to work, and who, in a few short weeks, will be tainted with the spirit of the world, and too probably, defiled with the heresy they now deplore ! What can be so acceptable to heaven as a life of devotion in a retreat like this ? Why, therefore, is it henceforth forbidden to us ? If we are driven from our chosen place of safety into a region of snares, with whom will rest the guilt of our destruction ? Not with Him whose kingdom is thus assailed. Heaven forbid the thought ! It rests with him into whose hand the firebrand is given for a season, that he himself may be consumed at length. O, that this had been before or after my day, that I might not have mourned the going down of the sun as I mourn it now ! It is gone. The last ray is fading from yonder highest peak. My last day of peace is closing.’ And Liese laid down her head and wept.

She sat motionless till it was dark, and then one of the sisters asked admittance. It was Helena, the youngest of the nuns, and the one who had most intercourse with Liese. She set down the lamp, and drawing Liese away from the window, placed her beside her on the couch. ‘ I did not come sooner,’ she said, ‘ though many of the sisters asked for you. I knew that their

spirits would be too much for you. They were even for me, though I cannot feel so melancholy as you do.'

'Where have you been, and what have you been doing?'

'They made me go out with them upon the walls to trace the different ways we shall be travelling to-morrow. It really was a beautiful evening, and I never saw the plain look so smiling, or its winding roads so tempting. How early the buds are bursting this year, as if it was on purpose to make our journey pleasant! Sister Catherine says, she never saw the woods with a green tinge upon them so early, and that they will be in full leaf before she has done travelling through them. Her way lies east, and we could not trace it far among the mountains. You may guess which way I looked.'

'And did you see Nuremberg?'

'I could just distinguish its towers far, far away. I own it did make me tremble to think of the space we have to cross before we shall be safely housed again. But with you beside me I shall not be afraid of any thing.'

Liese smiled mournfully on her young companion.

'The greatest danger of all, however,' said Helena, 'is one in which we could not help one another. Father Gottfried says, that the heretics in Saxony are becoming more and more violent, and that he thinks they may very likely come here. Carlostadius was lately at Hamburg, and his followers collected there, and went over the whole province, pulling down the altars, and unroofing the churches, and burning the books and priests' robes. There have been threatenings of such violence in this neighbourhood; and what should we do, Liese, if our way was lighted by burning churches?'

'Cast ourselves into the flames,' cried Liese, fervently.

'Not quite so,' said Helena. 'I would rather turn aside, and not see the sacrilege I could not prevent. But it would make our journey fearful.'

'Dread it not, Helena. Franconia is quiet, at present, and will probably remain so, since the adversary does not meet with the checks he has to encounter in the north. But is it not strange that he who stirred up all this confusion should have disappeared so suddenly, while the tumult waxes greater as if he were still present to excite it?'

'He is present,' said Helena. 'Books which no other man could write, appear from time to time. No one knows whence they come, or how they make their way; but none doubt that they are his, and his followers own them and act upon them. Father Gottfried says, the Evil One has made Martin invisible for a while, that he may escape the arm of the Holy See. But Mother Church cannot be long baffled; and if ever there was virtue in a papal bull, or an emperor's edict, the decrees of Worms cannot be long evaded, and Martin will burn, body and soul.'

'By the light of his pile, we will return hither,' said Liese. 'Nay,' said Helena, thoughtfully, 'but remember, that Martin is not now the only mover in this heresy. There is Carlostadius, with his crowds of followers in Saxony: and Melancthon has most influence among the people who ought to be the most scandalized by his master's heresy. Father Gottfried says, that the smooth hypocrisy of Melancthon, and the impious satires in the books of Erasmus, (which are spreading more than ever) are far more dangerous than any thing that such a bold-fronted wretch as Martin Luther can do. If so, I do not see how or where the evil is to be stayed.'

'Nor I, Helena. But we cannot doubt the power of the Church. On this we must depend. How shall we magnify this power if it should lodge us again safely here!'

Helena was silent. She took up a book which lay within reach, and began to examine it.

'How hard,' exclaimed Liese, 'that our very last service should have been profaned by the presence of the heretic sent by the magistrates, and to be obliged to receive and keep this book! Nothing, however, can oblige me to read it. I wonder that you should like to open it.'

'I had looked at my own, before,' said Helena. 'Do you know, I watched every one as the delegate made us pass before him, and receive the book. None looked so much moved as you, Liese. I was afraid you would have cast it down and trampled upon it.'

'I would have so trampled it under foot, if I had not feared to do harm by provoking opposition. But I also watched you, Helena, and I saw no traces of indignation. How was this?'

'Because I felt none. If it had been one of Martin's own books, I should have refused at all risks to receive it: but in this book there can be no heresy. It contains the gospel, which even Martin's enemies declare he has delivered pure.'

'It is enough for me, Helena, and it ought to satisfy you, that the Church delivers the gospel to us in due measure: and yet more, that the Word is here sent abroad clothed in a language in which it is not the will of the Church that it should be offered. If it be blasphemous to debase the gospel by translating it into a tongue which the meanest of the people may understand, it is surely daring, too daring, for one who is the spouse of Christ, to read what is thus translated. If Luther and Melancthon will thus defy the Church, it is not for us to encourage their heresy.'

Helena closed the book and changed the subject.

'How little did I think,' said she, 'when I took the vows, a year ago, how soon they should be broken!'

'And little did you imagine how easily you could bear to have them broken, Helena. This parting vesper service, which has wrung my soul, has not grieved yours.'

'Yes,' said Helena, 'I felt grief when I kissed the relics for the last time, and when I looked on the crucifix which must be carried away to-morrow. But then, Liese, I remembered Nuremberg. Nurse Bohrla's voice was in my ears, and I thought of my garden, where the plants I was so fond of cannot all have died, and of the singing birds, which nurse vowed to keep for my sake. I hope there is no sin in remembering these things. I am sure I said my prayers much better at nurse's knee when a child than I have ever done here : and I have never known so much of God within these walls, as I learned among my roses by the river side. Father Gottfried is very wise and very pious, I know ; but I learned quite as much religion as he has ever taught me, when our old John lifted me up that I might see the bees at work in the hive, and when he told me legends of the Saints as we sat in the shade angling for trout in the stream that runs past our garden. The swallows under the eaves have been a great comfort to me here. I have often been sorry to leave them for one of Father Gottfried's homilies.'

'If you feel thus,' said Liese, 'I cannot wonder that some of our sisters, who have parents and brethren, seem more ready to depart than even yourself. I had hoped that a life of devotion had been more precious to you all.'

'O, Liese, if you knew all, you would not say so, nor look on me with such severe compassion. You force from me now what I meant never to say to any one but my confessor.—Do you know I have long been wondering what has become of my devotion, and I hope I shall find that it has only been laid asleep in this dull place. I am not like you : I cannot be pious in all places and times alike ; and I cannot tell you how miserable this has made me whenever I thought of my vows. I am very weak, very childish ; and believe I shall feel more fervour in my prayers the first night that I shut myself into my own little chamber at Nuremberg, than, with all my efforts, I have felt for these many months. I could almost thank Martin himself if he could help me better than my confessor has done ; and it was because I saw something about prayer in that book that I was tempted to open it again. I wish you would let me tell you what I saw.'

For this, however, there was no time, all the sisters being punctually summoned to the refectory, where the delegate of the magistrates was entertained with due honour. Silenced by the unaccustomed presence of a stranger, the sisters were not slow in obeying the signal to withdraw when the meal was ended.

'This night, at least, I may spend in peace,' thought Liese, as she closed her breviary and extinguished her lamp. 'Heaven only knows when I may again be self-collected as it is my wont to be here ;' and she opened her lattice that she might look abroad as far as the grating allowed her upon the star-lit scenery, and be fanned by the night-breeze before she lay down to dream of heresy and the perils of the world.

She was awakened by the trampling of horses in the court-yard, and perceived immediately that the escort had arrived which was to conduct the members of the sisterhood to their various destinations, and that the gates of the convent were now thrown open, never again to be closed. She hastened her preparations for departure, carefully securing her crucifix in her bosom, and hiding the new bible of Luther, which she intended to leave behind, in a corner where it could not easily be found.

Helena, equipped for the journey, came presently to assist her.

' You carry your new bible in your bosom,' said she, not seeing it in company with the breviary. Liese pointed with a smile to the place where she had concealed it.

' Nay, but remember,' said Helena, ' that the delegate has orders to see that none of us leave the convent without a copy of this book. Besides, it will prove your best passport every where.'

This was true; and as the family of relatives to whom Liese was going had embraced the reformed faith, she acknowledged that she should consult her own peace best by providing herself with what might otherwise be forced upon her. She also consented to be gone without delay, rather than she might avoid witnessing the further desecration of the place, than from any sympathy in Helena's impatience. Having received the tearful benediction of the superior of the convent, and whispered something to the sisters about re-assembling in happier days, Liese and Helena mounted their horses, and, followed by their escort, took the road which led down the mountain, and wound through the champaign, which they must traverse on their way to Nuremberg.

* * * * *

It was long before Liese could at all reconcile herself to her new abode. In the various members of the family with whom she lived she found intelligent and amiable companions; friends on whose goodness she could depend, and for whose kindness she was grateful, but whose religious sympathy she shunned. The more she became aware how superior they were to the convent community in understanding, and in all companionable qualities, the more she feared their gaining any influence over her, as they had embraced the reformed doctrines in the fullest extent in which they had then been made known.

Pitying the sensitive state of nerves in which Liese appeared to be, and respecting her isolated situation as to spiritual concerns, the family of the Hüsens treated her with a consideration which even her grateful soul was unable fully to appreciate, since she knew not how generally and how vehemently the reformers indulged in invective and railing satire against the church of which she remained a member. No such invective, no such ridicule reached the ears of Liese; and she, on her part, avoided giving offence, by abstaining altogether from the mention of religious subjects.

She endeavoured to repay herself for this forced and painful silence, by the copiousness and fervour of her private devotions: but the endeavour failed. In vain she hastened to her apartment when the family assembled to read the bible of Luther; in vain, when they repaired to their church, she congratulated herself on being beyond the reach of disturbance. Her thoughts wandered as she repeated her prayers; her heart was cold, her intellect was dull, her whole spirit was troubled. She wept, but she could not pray as formerly. In the midst of her self-reproach, she sought for reasons. At first she supposed it was the novelty of place and circumstance which disturbed her, for she could not wholly escape the murmurs of a busy city. Then she thought it must be the lack of opportunity of confession which imposed a heavy weight on her spirit; and at times a feeling of horror came over her as she imagined that she might be dwelling in an atmosphere tainted by the Evil One, who had so many disciples at hand. One thing only she was sure of,—that she was wretched in her loneliness of soul.

All endeavours to induce her to leave the house had failed. It was not that she did not love free air and sunshine as well as Helena herself, but her more confirmed convent habits had occasioned a timidity and indolence which she had no motive at present strong enough to overcome. Besides, she could not yet think of changing her monastic dress, and to appear in it in the streets of Nuremberg would have been to provoke insult. The only object she could have in going out, she said, was to see Helena; who, she hoped, would spare her the effort by coming first. Helena came not, however. Liese waited patiently, saying to herself how natural it was that her young sister should be engrossed by objects whose revived interest must be so strong. She remembered how she sprang from her horse into the arms of her old nurse, and what transport was in her eyes when she waved her hand from the door to the departing escort. ‘It is but natural and just,’ thought Liese, ‘that I should give way for a time to older friends. I will wait.’ When she was well nigh tired of waiting, tidings came that Helena was ill, and had long been so. Here was a rousing motive. Liese changed her dress, and went out with her cousin Laura, avoiding every eye as she walked, and shrinking at the approach of every casual passenger. When they reached the fields and were alone, she looked up, she looked round, and a thrill of joy, such as she had long ceased to feel, ran through her frame. Fragrance from beneath her feet, beauty around, the music of the woods from afar,—all came at once to touch the springs of her loftiest sensibilities, and she was in a moment satisfied that her devotional feelings, however repressed, had not been destroyed. Now was the time, as Laura perceived, to invite their first religious sympathy, and the occasion was not lost. A few words from Luther’s bible, which Liese had nowhere

heard before, sank into her awakened mind, and were never afterwards forgotten. On a review of the day, she convinced herself that the renewed vigour of her piety was not so much owing to the satisfaction she had had in seeing Helena in a state of recovery, as in the new effort made, and the healthful associations revived by it. Henceforth she went out more and more frequently, finding comments on her breviary in the lilies of the field, and enshrining her homage in the evening and morning cloud.

(*To be continued.*)

SUNDAY SCHOOL EDUCATION.

IN this and a subsequent paper we propose to devote some attention to the subject of Sunday School education. What is, and what ought to be, the nature of Sunday School education is a question, the importance of which will be felt in some measure by those who reflect that above a million of the rising generation possess, and above a million now need, the tuition of the Sunday School. That all these—that is, the youth of our labouring population—are unable to obtain any other education; that an incalculable amount of happiness or misery depends on the influences to which this vast mass is subjected; happiness or misery affecting not themselves only, but others; not one million, but many millions; not one class of society, but all classes; and preeminently the class just above them—that is, reader, you and me, and all who are dear to us; not one generation, but the babe and the sire, and the wife and the husband, in many successive generations yet to come: who considers the position in the body-politic which late events have given, and which actual events are preparing to give, to the once despised and all but powerless, but now strong and about to become mighty, labouring classes—a position which will be the occasion to this nation of a sum of good or evil that defies calculation.

What then ought to be the education of the youthful poor? By education I do not mean the mere cultivation of the mind, but rather all the influences which combine to form the character and affect the happiness. To answer the question proposed, let us advert to their capacities. What has their Creator made them capable of? He has given them a mind to think, a heart to feel, and a spirit to aspire to himself and to eternity. This fact is attested by their lineage: for are they not of that blood of which God made all men to dwell together on the face of the earth?

The fact is attested by their history. True, it is a mournful one. Their capabilities have never been fully developed; in the vast majority of cases they have rather been utterly neglected.

Yet in the midst of the evils to which the neglect has given occasion, indications are seen of the high powers which the Creator has planted in their bosoms. The capacity of their minds you see in those rare but noble instances in which the poorest have risen to rank above princes in the proud and grateful hearts of benefited myriads. The capacity of their hearts is evinced in the parental beneficence by which, in spite of counteracting influences, many a cot is blessed ; and in the very machinery—a machinery of beneficence almost as pure and large as the history of the race supplies—in the very machinery by which the Sunday School, in its vast length and breadth, is supported. And for proof of their spiritual susceptibilities, look at every church throughout the land. Not many rich, not many learned are called ; but now, as in primitive days, it is rather the poor that hear the word gladly. Even in the abandoned, traces of a spiritual nature are found, which, though defiled by attendant vices, or marred by superstitious extravagance, will bear comparison with what is seen in the life of men who, because they are more opulent and exalted, look on them with ineffable disdain. Away, then, with the monstrous notion—a notion not the less to be deprecated because it may be one rather of practice than profession,—that the poor have not capabilities as high, pure, and holy as the classes most favoured in the world's esteem. Yes, not a child can you look upon, however humble its origin, however squalid its abode, however scanty its clothing, but has a mind that will operate to the advantage or the detriment of its possessor—to the increase or the diminution of political misrule and calamity ; but has a heart to benefit or injure—to bless or curse a household, perhaps a neighbourhood—it may be, a nation ; but has a spirit to offer upon the altar of its heavenly Father the purest and richest incense of praise and service, or to desecrate its Maker's holy name, and suffer the tribulation of his chastisement. Look not, then, on the poor with contempt ; despise not the least of these little ones. They have an intellectual, a moral, and spiritual nature, as good in its native endowments as that of the opulent and powerful ; and, with the aid of education, destined perhaps to rise, through the robust energy of their mind and the impelling force of necessity, to a higher rank of true excellence and dignity than, in the ordinary sense of the term, the most favoured classes. Certainly, whatever may be their future lot, they have received of God a mind to compete in sublimity with the highest intellect of the race ; a heart to feel as keenly, as purely, as richly as the best of Christian parents ; and a soul of equal worth with that of the proudest noble of the land. But, says the objector, look at their degradation. Is there not as much and as foul degradation in lordly halls and the palaces of kings ? And amid the degradation is there not virtue, of the greater price because acquired under greater disadvantages ? And to what is the degradation to be

ascribed? Is it not because the powerful have mostly used their power for their own advantage? Is it not because knowledge has been made the heritage of the few, or doled out to the many with a parsimonious spirit? Is it not because the poor in body have been kept poor in mind also? because they have been treated rather as beasts of burden than sons of God? because the object has been to make them passive instruments of luxury and despotism, rather than active, free, and well-furnished agents in the social commonwealth? But let education be given them; let it respect all their native capabilities, and a new creation will arise around us, depravity will be diminished, good multiplied, and the poorest will become, as God intended, rich in a holy spirit and a good life.

Surely it can hardly need a formal proof that the education of the poor should extend to all their capabilities. Look throughout nature—is there a sense given of God without a provision for its gratification—is there a natural want left unsupplied by the great benefactor of the Universe? I cannot then believe but that, in giving the capacity, he meant that the mind should receive the treasures of knowledge—but that he designed the mind to be fed with its appropriate nutriment—but that he—He who sent the gospel, before all others, to the poor, intended that the soul of the poor should, equally with that of the rich, rise in holy adoration to his mercy-seat, and partake of the riches of his love throughout eternity. Apply the argument to men at large. Why these endowments, if never to be developed and gratified? Apply it to the opulent. Why these endowments, if never to be developed and gratified? And if the opulent claim the privilege of an education embracing all their native susceptibilities—how much more justly may we claim it for the poor, whose circumstances in life are less auspicious—who have greater trials—greater temptations—whose privations are more numerous? With greater wants are they to have less supplies? If power answers in the affirmative—equity exclaims against the ungenerous and unjust reply.

An education that does not comprise all the susceptibilities of man scarcely deserves the name. There is, in fact, no such division between the mind, the heart, and the soul as theory and the convenience of language make. These several terms are but words to express the various aspects under which the human being may be regarded. They spring not from man's nature, but our distinctions. If so, then, when you have pronounced in favour of education, you have declared that man—the whole man—that the mind, the heart, the soul should be alike educated. And the evils which result from a partial education are at once the penalties of our neglect, and the exposure of the groundlessness of our distinctions. Let the mind be developed and the heart neglected, and the power acquired by the first is rendered useless or baneful by the weakness or depravity of the second,

Cultivate the heart and neglect the mind—and nature will want consistency because it wants principle, and good intentions will perhaps become the more ready and the more efficient, because the fair-seeming, instrument of the designing. Should the mind and heart be well developed, but the soul left uncultivated—you lose, in the loss of the high and powerful sanctions of religion, the best security of goodness—the best prompter to duty—the noblest impulse to lofty and self-denying beneficence. No, moral perfection consists in the well-proportioned cultivation of all our powers—in their combined and harmonious action—in their entire devotement to the service of God and man. And far preferable is it that the degree of cultivation should be less, provided it extend to the whole man, than that any one faculty should be, however fully, exclusively developed. But it may be said, you are pleading for a higher degree of cultivation than it is possible for the youthful poor to receive. I plead not for a high degree of cultivation. I would wish indeed, that the cultivation of the poor as well as of the rich should be of the highest order—should be carried to the greatest extent of which the faculties admit. But this is not what I now labour to promote—but a well balanced, simultaneous, and accordant cultivation of the whole man. I look not at the extent, but the perfection of the work as far as it goes. Let the improvements of the mind, the heart, and the soul proceed at the same time and step by step. This makes a good education, not the disproportionate cultivation of any one faculty. This fits man for the several stages of being through which he has to pass—this opens out all the springs of excellence and pleasure which God has hidden in the human bosom.

Look at the poor in reference to their duties. Is a child obedient because his mind has been stored, however richly, with knowledge? Is not something more required? Ought not that knowledge to be reduced to practice by the cultivation of the heart? Should not advantage be taken of the power of imitation—the force of habit, in order to make it feel what it knows, and lead it to observe what it has been taught? Does a father acquire practical wisdom, and the power of governing efficiently and kindly the inmates of his house, by merely learning the truths of science or perusing the page of history? Is a member of the state fitted to influence its destinies by having been taught to read and write, while perhaps he neglects his private duties, ministers to the gratification of his passions rather than to the wants of his family, and, in the desperation of his abandoned heart, and the destitution of his neglected home, is ready to promote the views of the tyrant or the demagogue? And what an education for a mother—one who has to form her children's character—to promote their health—to keep her house in order and in peace—to make the most of a scanty provision—to win and keep her hus-

band's heart—to make his home his delight—to be his helpmate and his solace—what an education for a mother, to have received merely the key to knowledge, and remain untutored in the discipline of the affections and unimpressed with the value of the soul! It has been said, that the poor are not the better for what they have been taught. If the allegation were as true as it is false, the proper inference would be, not that they should be taught less, but more—not that their minds should be neglected—but that their hearts and their souls should be cultivated together with their minds. Have they abused knowledge? teach them how to use it. Have they made the key given them open the fountains of obscenity and impiety? Create in them a taste for what is pure and holy. Are they still under the sway of their passions? Place their passions under the control of religion. Do they misuse the power they have, and yet demand more? Lead them to see that the first and highest exercise of power is the acquirement of self-command. Do they pursue wrong measures for their welfare? Cure their ignorance. Give them more knowledge—combine moral worth with mental cultivation, and let religion preside over both.

**HERDER'S THOUGHTS ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HISTORY
OF MANKIND.****ART. III.**

In the opening of Sir W. Jones's First Discourse to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, there is, if we remember right, a most animated description of his feelings, when at sea, during the preceding year, upon finding himself, at a particular point, on consulting the log-book for the day, almost encircled by the vast continent of Asia—Arabia on his left, and India, with China and Tartary still beyond, before him. What this distinguished orientalist so strongly felt on approaching these regions, we experience in an inferior degree even in reading of them. There is a kind of magic in the very word Asia, which calls up in the mind a mingled train of the most interesting conjectures and wildest associations. The awful obscurity that hangs over its primeval history—its venerable dialects—its traditions, stretching back almost to the beginning of the present order of existence—the dateless origin of its arts—of its mysterious fragments of science—of its governments and its religions—its mighty streams, whether, like the Ganges, worshipped with the most ancient of superstitions, or wasting on their waves, like the Oxus, the Euphrates, and the Indus, the earliest traffic in the world—its boundless plains traversed from time immemorial by nomad nations—and its gigantic mountain-ranges, whose recesses were perhaps the first seats of civilization and the

cradle of the human race—all these vague and wonderful considerations, one after another, suggest themselves to the mind in thinking of the East, and give to its history a strange and indefinable interest, that attaches to no other portion of the globe. The ancients hallowed the fountain-head of streams, as the dwelling-place of the guardian Naiad ; and in turning with Herder to those ancient sources, from which the most venerable and sacred traditions have sprung, we are almost tempted to kneel down beside the living waters and worship the unseen genius of humanity whose spirit sanctifies them.

Two theories have been proposed concerning the early peopling and civilization of the earth, which are briefly noticed in passing by Herder, but only to be rejected : one, that the progenitors of the present inhabitants of the globe, with the most ancient arts and traditions, which they have transmitted to their descendants, were a remnant rescued from the general wreck of a former state of existence, to connect, as by an isthmus, the moral culture of two worlds*; the other, that the great mountain-chains, with the lands that have been gradually deposited on their sides, were the seats of a distinct population, which has spread itself over the earth from those several centres—the Mountains of the Moon, for example, being the birth-place of the negroes ; the Andes, of the Americans ; the Alps, of the Europeans ; and the Ural Chain, of the Asiatics. This last hypothesis has been warmly espoused by many acute and learned inquirers : Herder assigns the reasons why it does not appear to him to be founded in truth. As we ascend in the scale of creation, the numbers and diffusion of the successive species diminish ; compare, in this view, the nobler animals, such as the lion and the elephant, with worms and infusoria : analogy, therefore, is in favour of the supposition, that man, as the crown of the visible creation, might originate in a single spot, prepared for his reception, and furnished with all the aids of climate, soil, and natural productions, for nourishing and developing his fine and delicate organization. A situation thus adapted to the birth and infancy of the human race, we find in Central Asia. The spot which Linnaeus has imagined to himself as the scene of creation actually exists in nature † ; and Pallas has remarked, that, with very few exceptions, all those animals which have been domesticated in northern and southern latitudes, such as the ox, the sheep, the goat, the swine, the camel, the cat, and the dog, are found wild in the temperate regions of Central Asia. To this quarter the most ancient traditions constantly point, as the original seat of population ; and from this centre

* For a fuller exposition of this fanciful hypothesis, which has nevertheless found its supporters, Herder refers in particular to an acute ' Inquiry concerning the Origin of the Knowledge of Truth and of the Sciences,' published at Berlin in 1781.

† *Oratio de Terra habitabili. Amœnit. Academ. Vol. II., p. 439*, quoted by Herder, Book X., ch. ii., p. 251.

mankind, reared in their infancy with peculiar care and tenderness by providence, sallied forth towards wilder regions under sterner skies ; and, equipped with a traditional knowledge of the most necessary arts of life, and of the elementary principles of religion and morality, acquired the power of artificially adapting themselves to those varieties of climate and situation, for which their natural weakness was totally unfit.

For any distinct information concerning these remote events it is vain to explore the mythological dreams and cosmogonies of the Indians, Phœnicians, or Egyptians. ‘The only historical document,’ as Herder remarks, ‘to which we can, with any certainty, refer, is the written tradition, which we call the Mosaic. Apart from all prejudice, and without any attempt to determine its origin and author, we know for certain, that it is more than three thousand years old, and is the most ancient work which gives any account of the infancy of the human race. A glance will show us all that we are to expect from its brief and simple narrative, since we regard it not as history but as tradition—or, rather, as an antique philosophy of the history of man ; and, for that reason, we may strip it at once of the poetical decorations of its oriental dress *.’

On the circumstances which distinguish Moses amongst those who have described the origin and primitive condition of the world, Herder makes the following just and pertinent observations :—‘In his recitals he has omitted all that lies beyond the sphere of human vision and conception ; and confined himself to that which we see with our eyes and can embrace in our thoughts. What question, for example, has excited more controversy than that concerning the age of the world, concerning the duration of our earth and of the human race ? The chronological computations of the Asiatic traditions have been looked upon as remarkably profound ; and the Mosaic account has been ridiculed as exceedingly childish, because it is affirmed that, in opposition to all reason, and in defiance of the visible witness of the earth’s structure, it hastens over the work of creation as a trifling event, and represents the human race as so recent. But, methinks, the historian is not fairly treated. If Moses were the collector, to say the least, of these ancient traditions, he could not, versed as he was in the learning of the Egyptians, have been unacquainted with those ages of gods and demigods, with which that people, as well as all the nations of Asia, commenced their histories of the world. Why then were these ages not woven into his narrative ? Why, as if in defiance and contempt of them, did he employ a symbol of the shortest period of time to express the successive stages of the world’s creation ? Clearly because he regarded them as unprofitable fables, which he wished to remove altogether from the minds of men. Herein he seems to me to have acted

* Book X., ch. iv., p. 273.

judiciously; since beyond the limits of the earth, as it now exists—that is, before the origin of the human race and the course of events connected with it—there can be for us no chronology that deserves the name *.' Of all the wonders with which the collected traditions of Asia have so richly adorned the paradise of the primeval world, the Mosaic account has preserved only these—the two trees—of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil; a speaking serpent, and a cherub; the endless multitude of other marvels the venerable philosopher totally rejects, and even these, which he has retained, he has clothed in a narrative full of instructive meaning. But one forbidden tree is planted in Paradise, and this, according to the seductive representations of the serpent, bears the fruit of that divine wisdom which man covets after. Could he aspire to anything loftier? Could he, even in his fall, assume a nobler character? Let any one compare this narrative, considered merely as an allegory, with the legends of other nations; it surpasses them all in the beauty and delicacy with which it symbolically represents what has ever been the source of all the weal and the woe of human nature. Our questionable struggles after knowledge, that befits us not—the wanton use and perversion of our free-agency—our restless widening and overstepping of the limits which moral laws must of necessity assign to the feebleness of a being, whose first duty is to know himself; this is the fiery wheel under which we groan, and whose revolution even now makes up almost the whole circle of our existence. This great truth Moses knew as well as we; and he exhibits it to us, tied up in the knot of a story of infantine simplicity, in which are knitted together nearly all the ends of the threads of humanity. In the Indian and Thibetian mythologies there are allusions to efforts for the attainment of immortality, and to the loss of original felicity through misconduct; but none of the legends appear to me to attain to the clear depth, the childlike simplicity of this tradition of Moses, which contains only so much of the wonderful as serves to identify the age and country when and where it arose. The same narrative relates, that the first created human beings maintained an instructive intercourse with Elohim; that, under this divine direction, they attained, through the naming of animals, to the use of speech and a governing reason; that when man, by forbidden means, would make himself like to God in the knowledge of evil, he did it to his own injury, and was removed, in consequence, to another place, and doomed to enter on a new and more artificial course of life: all which circumstances of the tradition contain, under the veil of fable, truths more important to mankind, than the great systems which have been invented concerning the original condition of Autochthones. If, as we have seen, the prerogatives of human nature are nothing more than innate capabilities, which demand a pecu-

* Book X., ch. vi., pp. 286, 287.

liar development and transmission by education, speech, tradition and art ; not only must the threads of a humanity thus fashioned, spreading through all nations and to all the ends of the earth, ultimately unite in a common origin, but they must also, to make human nature what it is, from the very first have been artfully woven together. As a child cannot for many years be left to itself without either perishing or undergoing a depravation of nature, so the human race, in the first blossoming of its education, could not with safety be abandoned to its own guidance. Men who have been once accustomed to live like the orang-outang, will never, from the spontaneous workings of their own minds, overcome their degradation, and pass from a speechless and hardened brutality to the enjoyment of the gifts of humanity. If, then, it was the will of the Deity that man should exercise reason and foresight, the Deity himself must have watched over the commencement of his career with reason and foresight. From the first moment of his existence, art, education, and culture were indispensable to him ; and thus the specific characteristic of humanity is itself a pledge for the essential truth of this oldest philosophy of our history*.'

The ensuing observations on the flood, though not orthodox, are well deserving of attention ; and the spirit of them may be profitably applied to some other passages of the Mosaic history. ' Though there can be no doubt, from the researches of natural history, and from traces still subsisting, especially in Asia, that the inhabited portions of the globe have been subjected to a violent inundation ; yet, what Moses has delivered to us on this subject is neither more nor less than a *national* narrative. With great judgment, the collector has gathered together many traditions, and delivers to the reader even the journal which his tribe possessed of this terrible catastrophe. The tone of the relation is so completely in the style of thinking peculiar to this tribe, that it would be a perversion of it to take it out of the limits within which the proofs of its credibility must be found. In the same way as one family of this tribe, with a numerous stock and household, saved itself, other families in other tribes might also save themselves, as their own traditions show. Thus in Chaldaea, Xisuthrus and his race were preserved, with a number of animals, without which men could not then subsist ; and in India, Vishnou himself was the steersman of the bark which conveyed those who were rescued from the waves to land. Similar traditions exist among all the ancient nations of this part of the world,—in each, varied according to their usages and situation ; and, while they furnish convincing proofs that the deluge of which they speak was general in Asia, they help us at once out of the difficulty in which we should unnecessarily place ourselves, were we to interpret every incident in a family history as belonging exclusively to

* Book X., ch. vi., p. 294—297.

the history of the world, and were thereby to deprive this history even of the credibility to which it is well entitled*.'

To the south of the great Altaian chain, which stretches from west to east across Asia, we discover the seats of the earliest civilized communities in the world: such as China, Thibet, Tartary, and Indostan; and to these regions, in tracing the progress of human society, the attention of the historian would, in the first instance, be naturally directed. Without accompanying Herder through all his remarks on these nations, we cordially subscribe to his opinion of the great importance of researches into their history and antiquities. 'History,' he observes, 'especially the history of government and civilization, implies a commencement; but in what obscurity is this commencement involved among all the nations that we have hitherto considered! Could my voice have any influence, I would encourage every historical inquirer to investigate the origin of civilization among the most celebrated people of Asia, in a spirit of modest sagacity, unbiassed by hypothesis and the influence of preconceived opinion. An ample collection, both of the accounts and of the monuments, that we possess of these nations—of their written character and languages—of their most ancient works of art and their mythology—and of the principles and methods which they still employ in the few sciences which subsist among them—all this, compared with the region which they inhabit, and with the intercourse which they may have carried on, would undoubtedly lay open to us a chain of progressive civilization, the first link of which would be found neither at Selinginsk nor in the Grecian Bactra †.'

Upon turning westward, we perceive a remarkable change in the sudden and constant revolutions to which the kingdoms in the vicinity of the Tigris and Euphrates have been exposed. Here states have followed states, and nations nations, in rapid succession; and, while the laws, the manners, and the religions of China and India have subsisted in the same form from time immemorial, Babylon and Nineveh, Ecbatana, Persepolis, and Tyre, are names that have long vanished from the earth. In this quarter of the world occurs a small tribe, distinguished neither for arts, for science, nor for arms, whose numbers, power, and extent of territory, appear altogether contemptible when compared with the vast empires of Assyria and Persia; but whose extraordinary fortunes, as well as the influence exercised by their singular literature on the development of modern civilization, entitle them, independently of any other considerations, to a marked and serious attention. We refer to the Hebrews.

It is a remarkable circumstance in the history of this people, that they possess written documents of a date prior to the introduction of the art of writing amongst most civilized nations; and

* Book X., ch. vii., pp. 299, 300.

† Book XI., ch. v., pp. 43, 44.

that these documents do not appear to have been drawn, like those of the Egyptians for instance, from the obscure interpretation of hieroglyphical characters, but to have grown out of their genealogical registers, interwoven with historical legends and songs. The superstitious scrupulousness with which these writings were preserved by the nation as a sacred deposit, is a guarantee for their substantial integrity; and when, finally, in this state, they were delivered into the hands of Christian nations, they were subjected to a freer spirit of criticism and interpretation than was compatible with the bigoted devotion of the Jew. Viewing the subject impartially, and making due allowance for the strength of Oriental phraseology, we may consider these sacred books as fully entitled to historical credit. The extremity of prejudice by which both those who defended, and those who attacked, these writings, were actuated, at the time when Herder wrote this part of his work in 1787, is strikingly indicated in the following passage :—‘ I am not then ashamed to adopt substantially the history of the Hebrews, as they themselves relate it; but could wish at the same time, that the writings of their assailants, (as of Manetho the Egyptian,) instead of being simply rejected, should be judiciously made use of*.’

With the origin and diffusion of Christianity, the Jewish Scriptures obtained a wider circulation in the world; and it is curious to trace their various influence in generally promoting—though sometimes, in their perversion, retarding—the progress of civilization. In laying the foundations of all religion and philosophy in the sublime doctrine of one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in setting forth the perfections, and hymning the praises of that great Being, with a grandeur and elevation—with a fervour and devotedness, to which no human composition has ever even approached, their influence on the mind and character of man has been pre-eminently beneficial and exalting; and if they are compared, in this respect, with the Schuking of the Chinese, with the Sadder and Zend-Avesta of the Persians, or even with the more recent Koran of Mahomet, their superiority over all the sacred books of the ancient nations will be at once acknowledged.

Nor ought we, in the same view, to leave out of consideration the stimulating effect on the popular mind, of their representations of the creation and age of the world, and of the origin of evil, of the pure morality of their didactic books, and of the varied and instructive interest of their historical narratives. Whether the Jewish chronology be true or false, it expands the mind of the people, and serves them as a general measure of the course of events in the world; and when we further take into account the learning and sagacity that have been exercised on these writings, the skill in languages, criticism, and dialectic,

* Book XII., ch. iii., p. 79.

which the study of them has involved, we cannot hesitate—looking at the subject merely with the eye of human philosophy—to admit their very great and very beneficial influence on the course of social improvement.

On the other hand, the perversion of the Jewish Scriptures has been productive of great mischiefs; and the more so, because it has given to these mischiefs the apparent sanction of divine authority.

' How many absurd systems of cosmogony have been spun out of the sublime simplicity of the Mosaic narrative of the creation! How many harsh doctrines and wild hypotheses have been founded on the story of the apple and the serpent! For centuries, inquirers into nature conceived themselves bound to reconcile all the phenomena of the earth's formation with the forty days of the flood; and historians chained the destinies of whole nations to the fortunes of the single people of God, and to the misconceived interpretation of the prophet's vision of the four monarchies.' ' Even in morals and politics, the misapplication of the Hebrew writings has put fetters on the human mind, and impeded the free development of the national spirit. Without any regard to the difference of times, and of the state of civilization, the intolerance of the Jewish religion has been supposed to furnish a precedent for the conduct of Christians; and passages have been quoted from the Old Testament to justify the monstrous project of trammelling the free and practical spirit of Christianity with the forms of a Jewish state religion. In like manner, it is undeniable, that the usages of the temple, and the ecclesiastical language of the Hebrews, have had a marked influence on public worship and pulpit eloquence, and on the hymns and litanies of all Christian nations, and have often impressed on the language of devotion all the peculiarities of an Oriental idiom. The laws of Moses have been considered as binding in all climates, and under circumstances very different from those for which they were originally calculated; and, from this cause, not one Christian people has framed its legislation and policy on principles strictly its own. Thus the choicest good is drawn by perversion into various evils, as the most salutary elements of nature are sometimes converted into the means of destruction, and the most powerful medicines become a subtle poison *.'

On the subject of the final restoration of the Jewish people to their native land, Herder expresses an opinion directly opposite to that which Dr. Priestley is known to have entertained, and which he espoused in some of his latter publications, with an ardour quite at variance with the ordinary sobriety of his philosophical judgment. By some, Herder will be deemed too dogmatical on the other side of the question. ' Let no one, from the

* Book XII., ch. iii., pp. 85—87.

wide dispersion of the Jewish people, superstitiously look forward to a revolution, which, through them, shall one day be accomplished for all the inhabitants of the earth. Whatever revolution was destined to be wrought by them is, in all probability, already accomplished ; and for the expectation of any other, there does not appear, either in the circumstances of the people itself, or in the general analogy of history, the slightest foundation. The preservation of the Jews as a separate race is not more difficult to explain than the preservation of the Bramins, the Parsees, or the Gypsies *.' When Herder further adds, that 'the Jews, under all their oppressions, never turn with a sentiment of longing to their native land, and to the recovery of their ancient honours and habitation,' is he borne out by the matter of fact? We believe not.

With a rapid sketch of the state of ancient Egypt, and of the Phoenician settlements, Herder completes his view of the eastern world. In Egypt, it is well known that the most important discoveries have been made since his time, the results of which he has almost anticipated in the following observation :—' It is vain to search for a hidden wisdom in the inscriptions of obelisks ; the very use of hieroglyphics—the first rude symbols by which men endeavour to express their thoughts—forbids the supposition that any such wisdom exists ; and should a means ever be devised of deciphering them, what could we expect to find, but some chronicle of past events, or an idolizing eulogy on the founder of the edifice †?' With respect to Tyre and Carthage, Herder well remarks, that their position on the Mediterranean Sea, which ties together, as it were, the three great quarters of the ancient world, was the source of all their wealth, and one main cause of the subsequent civilization of Europe. The scantiness of our information concerning the internal constitution, the domestic manners, the laws and policy of these commercial states, is perhaps the greatest of all the deficiencies that we experience in our knowledge of antiquity, since these particulars must necessarily have afforded so many interesting and instructive points of comparison with the most striking features of modern society. In looking back on the general character of the East, we cannot avoid noticing its devoted adherence to hereditary doctrines and traditional usages, and, what at once results from this tendency, the fixed and immovable attitude of its manners and institutions. We have already pointed out the agency of tradition in assisting the progressive work of civilization ; and its operations on a large scale may be traced in the history of Asia. On this subject, Herder justly remarks :—' Tradition is an ordinance of nature, admirable in itself, and indispensable to the progress of our race ; but as soon as ever it fetters the free exercise of thought, either

* Book XII., ch. iii., p. 89.

Book XII., ch. v., p. 106.

in communicating instruction or in adjusting the practical institutions of society—as soon as ever it impedes the progress of the human reason in accommodating itself to altered times and circumstances, it becomes a real opiate of the intellect, both for communities, and sects, and individuals. Asia, that vast continent, the fruitful mother of all the illumination that has spread over the habitable globe, has tasted too freely of this sweet poison, and administered it to others. Whole kingdoms and extensive sects slumber in its bosom, as St. John is fabled to slumber in his grave: he breathes softly; but now, for near two thousand years, the sleep of death has been upon him, and he tarries in gentle repose till the Awakener comes*.'

As we bend our course farther westward, the history of mankind assumes a different aspect. The elements of civilization, that still continued to be drawn from the fertile sources of the East, were brought into new forms and actuated by a new spirit, on reaching the coasts and islands of Greece. This striking change was owing probably, in part, to the scattered and insular distribution of the Grecian people, their devotion to the peril and enterprise of a sea-faring life, their division into many independent and hostile tribes, and the free spirit that was necessarily engendered amid scenes of such continual stirring and strife. Amidst these excitements, the Grecian muse arose, and cherished, with her free and popular songs, the heroic virtues of the race. The poems of Homer were amongst the most powerful of the instruments of Grecian civilization. Whatever passed into the hands of this wonderful people was moulded at once into the forms of beauty, and became instinct with the spirit of poetry. The massive and disproportioned architecture of Egypt they spiritualized into symmetry and grace; and, with them, the hideous objects of Oriental worship grew into the breathing shapes of gods and heroes, which embodied the ideal of humanity. Their religion harmonized with their character, and with the aspect of their land; it was bright, festal, and gay; conversant with forms of beauty and sounds of joy, intermingled with the dance, the feast, and the song. And their poetry: it was not the cold elaboration of the closet, entombed in the sepulchral silence of a written book; it lived in action, in the eye of men; it spoke in the tones of the living voice; it was the glad utterance of the national soul. The absence of these original accompaniments, which gave meaning and expression to their eloquence and poetry, by investing them with something of a religious character, and their calling into exercise a multitude of subtle and undefinable emotions, renders it impossible for us at the present day to enter fully into their spirit, or to comprehend the astonishing effects which they often produced. Mere

* Book XII., ch. vi., pp. 118, 119.

scholarship cannot alone supply the want ; the most exact grammatical interpretation sets before us but the skeleton of the poet's thought ; it is only by throwing ourselves back into the poet's age, and reviving the scenes and feelings which furnished his inspiration, that we can clothe it with flesh, and breathe into it the spirit of its original vitality. In a passage, which we have not room to quote, Herder has some beautiful remarks on this subject—in reference to the choral songs of Aristophanes and the tragedians, and the triumphal odes of Pindar* ; and what he there expresses every one must have felt, who has endeavoured to realise to himself, through the medium of the original, the native force and freshness of those truly national effusions of the Grecian muse. The gorgeous accumulation of splendid epithets, heaped one upon another with lavish prodigality, perpetually shifting and gleaming on the mental eye, like a train of painted clouds, and discovering at every turn, amidst partial obscurity, the hidden brightness which irradiates them, yet impressing, after the most careful elucidation, nothing like a distinct picture on the imagination ; all this, so peculiar to the choral poesy of the Greeks, and so strongly expressive of the wildness of its dithyrambic origin, was anciently distilled into the ears of listening crowds with the sweetness of the most exquisite rhythmus, and awoke into responsive harmony the thousand chords of religious and patriotic association, over which the soft sighing of its music swept. But for us, these magic influences are all past and gone ; the words indeed are there, but the spirit which warmed them is fled ; and, as Herder beautifully expresses it, only the shade* of a departed beauty remains.

Poetry is the earliest expression of the language of mankind—the form, in which the first rude conceptions, the first wild conjectures, the simplest, deepest, and most natural feelings of unfolding humanity develop themselves : poetry is succeeded by philosophy ; and in their philosophy, as in their poetry, the free spirit of the Greeks is conspicuous. Amongst them we see no extensive sects, as in Asia, holding immense multitudes in implicit subjection to the doctrines of their founder, and transmitting these doctrines with unimpaired authority from one generation to another ; but every individual exercised the greatest freedom of thought and speech upon the various topics which then came within the circle of philosophy, and, even in attaching himself to some particular teacher, only assumed a position of hostility towards other schools, and involved himself in endless disputation. The very extreme to which the Sophists carried their taste for wrangling, and which justly drew down on them the sarcastic rebukes of Socrates, clearly marks the tendency of the Grecian mind—contrasts it most forcibly with the hereditary torpor of the coun-

* Book XIII., ch. ii., p. 141.

† Schattenwerk.

tries from which it derived the rudiments of its culture—and indicates the commencement of that train of causes, with which the march of the human intellect may properly be said to be connected, and which, combining in its progress with other elements, has gradually wrought out the knowledge and intelligence of modern Europe.

'The spirit of inquiry among the Greeks,' says Herder, 'was especially turned towards human and ethical philosophy, their age and their circumstances conspiring to lead it in this direction. All their speculations related to the nature and character of man. This was the prevailing tone of their poetry, history, and policy. The passions and energies of men had then a freer play; even the dreaming philosopher participated in them; to govern his fellow-men, and co-operate actively in the affairs of society, was the great aim of every aspiring soul; no wonder, then, that the philosophy of even abstract thinkers, such as Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, should turn upon the rule of conduct and the government of the state. Pythagoras never filled any magisterial office, and his philosophy, for the most part, was speculation, almost bordering on superstition; yet the pupils, who issued from his school, exercised the most powerful influence on the states of Magna Græcia, and the league of his followers, could it have been lasting, would have proved a most powerful, at least a very unexceptionable, instrument, in promoting the improvement of the world. But this step, undertaken by a man who was very far before his age, was premature; the tyrants of Sybaris and the associated states desired no such guardians of the public morals, and the Pythagoreans were murdered.'

'It is a frequent, but, as it seems to me, an exaggerated commendation of the philanthropic Socrates, that he first drew philosophy down from heaven to earth, and brought it into friendly alliance with the moral life of man—at least the commendation must be limited to the narrow circle of the philosopher's own life. Long before his time, there had been men who cultivated an ethical and practical philosophy; indeed, from the age of the fabulous Orpheus, this had been the distinguishing character of Grecian civilization. Even Pythagoras had, through the medium of his disciples, contributed far more to the improvement of the morals of mankind, than Socrates with all his friends. That the latter loved not the heights of abstraction was to be ascribed to his situation, the circle of his attainments, the period when he lived, and his peculiar mode of life. The systems of pure imagination, without further experimental inquiries into nature, might be considered as exhausted, and the Grecian wisdom had become the juggling prate of sophists; so that it required no great force of mind to despise or abandon speculations, which it was not possible, with existing aids, to pursue any farther. Against the dazzling speciousness of the sophists, Socrates was protected by

his demon, his natural probity, and his unambitious adoption of the quiet life of a citizen. This kept humanity constantly before him as the proper object of his philosophy, and enabled him to exert so beneficial an influence on all who associated with him ; but to the peculiar efficiency of this influence, his age, his country, and the men with whom he lived, also contributed. In any other situation, the citizen-philosopher would have been simply an enlightened and virtuous man, and posterity might, perhaps, have never heard of his name ; since no discovery, no new doctrine peculiar to himself, has he imprinted on the page of time ; it is only by his method of teaching and his mode of life, by the moral culture which he acquired himself and sought to communicate to others, but more especially by the circumstances of his death, that he has become a pattern to the world. Much, indeed, was required to make a Socrates ; above all, the noble simplicity and fewness of his wants, and that exquisite taste in moral beauty, which he seems to have matured into a kind of instinct. Meantime, let us not raise this eminently wise and good man above the sphere in which providence itself had placed him.

‘ Since his wisdom was confined to the government and economy of his own peculiar life, he trained up few disciples completely worthy of himself ; and his admirable method, in the mouth of his immediate followers, degenerated into sarcasms and sophisms, as soon as ever the ironical questioner was wanting in the spirit of his master’s mind and heart. If we compare impartially even his two greatest disciples, Xenophon and Plato, we shall find that he was, to use his own modest and favourite expression, but the midwife of their peculiar forms of mind ; and, therefore, he himself appears in so different a light in the representations of these two writers. The difference visible in their writings clearly results from the diversity of their respective habits of thinking ; and the finest tribute of gratitude which they could offer to their beloved instructor, was the endeavour to set forth his moral image. In every point of view it would have been most desirable, that the spirit of Socrates should have penetrated, through the influence of his disciples, into all the laws and constitutions of Greece ; that this was not the case, the whole of Grecian history shows. His life coincided with the highest point of Athenian civilization, and also occurred just at the crisis of the fiercest struggle between the Grecian states ; neither of these circumstances could fail to draw after it disastrous times and a general corruption of manners, which not long afterwards terminated in the complete subversion of Grecian freedom. Against the operation of such causes no Socratic wisdom could be of any avail : it was too pure and refined to decide the destinies of nations. Xenophon, the warrior and statesman, delineated bad forms of government which he had not the power to alter. Plato created an ideal republic which nowhere existed, and least of all

in the court of Dionysius. In short, the philosophy of Socrates has rendered more service to the general interests of human nature than to the freedom and well-being of Greece; and, doubtless, this is the nobler praise *.

The independence of Greece was of no long continuance; but, during its short career, it deposited seeds of improvement, which ripened and bore fruit long after the fall of Grecian freedom; it set in motion principles of thought and action, which were subsequently diffused to the utmost limits of the Roman empire, and thus prepared the way for more extensive and beneficial changes in the moral and social condition of mankind.

WAR.

From the Dutch.—By a young Lady of Groningen.

TRANSLATED BY DR. BOWRING.

How green is yon valley—how songful its trees,
Its blossoms in glory are dancing;

What sunshine—what fragrance—what beauties are these!

'Tis an Eden all fair and entrancing.

Indeed, in the world there are scenes where the soul

Can revel in joys without measure;

Where its pinions expanded spurn every control,

And its pulses all gladden with pleasure.

Come, look on these charms—see yon mountain that towers

To talk with the clouds it divideth,

And hear that sweet streamlet that sings to the flowers

As gently and gaily it glideth.

And lo! the gold harvests are ripe—and their gold

With sapphires and rubies is shaded—

Indeed 'tis a transport such bliss to behold

With such beauty and brightness pervaded!

Deep, deep in the dell is the husbandman's cot,

Where labour and peace are united,

Where fame never brought discontent to his lot,

And ambition a bud never blighted.

And near is the village—go reckon the men,

And the joys that around them are hovering;

Their joys—you may count them, and count them again—

And thousands are left for discovering.

For pleasure is Nature's first impulse—it springs

Spontaneous from earth's fertile bosom;

It flutters—it soars on the lark's skyward wings—

It breathes on the snow-drop's pure blossom.

It shines in the day-star and night stars—it speaks

In the cicada's chirp at the even;

In the stillness it rests—in the zephyrs it wakes,

And it fills all the concave of heaven.

* Book XIII., ch. v., p. 169—172.

Now enter that dwelling—for happiness there
 Her triumphs is gently revealing :
 Tread lightly—the father is bending in prayer,
 And the children around him are kneeling.
 List!—‘ Father ! Our Father ! the Father of all !
 Who hast taught us to love one another,
 O teach us, while others our brethren we call,
 To love every one as a brother.

For love is thy sceptre, thy shield, and thy sword ;
 ‘Tis thy might and thy majesty blended ;
 And love is the holy, the hallowing word,
 By the smiles of heaven’s angels attended.
 Yes ! Love is the sister of Peace—is the twin
 Of Religion—is Virtue’s own essence ;
 Whose absence is sorrow, and suffering, and sin—
 And peace, truth, and glory its presence !

Such last were the sounds, so melodious and pure,
 Which the winds of the valley had laden ;
 That I said, O this earth is a paradise sure—
 And this Valley the Garden of Eden !
 But I heard in the distance the screech of the owl,
 And I saw the black raven glide by me,
 And I knew not the cause, but it seemed that the scowl
 Of some fiendish intruder was nigh me.

And soon there was rumbling of noises,—a din
 That gather’d and grew in the distance :
 There were clashings and stampings without and within,
 And the shrieks and the shouts of resistance.
 No silence—no sleep—all the Demons of Hell
 Are loosen’d, and madden’d, and raving ;
 There are rivers of blood—how they widen and swell—
 Which those beautiful valleys are laving.

What shouts of distress, and what yells of despair !
 What agonis’d groans from the foemen—
 The husbandmen flee from the ruin that’s there,
 With the terror-struck children and women.
 Their houses are blazing—’midst darkness and death
 They are wand’ring, and weeping, and wailing,
 The air is all tainted with sulphurous breath,
 And the earth human gore is inhaling.

’Twas war—cursed war !—they had come with their hordes
 Of murd’rers those regions to ravage—
 They lifted their lances,—they brandish’d their swords—
 They utter’d the howls of the savage.
 And onward through blood and through battle they filed,
 All reckless—yet—frightful delusion !
 They shouted out ‘ Glory ! ’—yes—‘ Glory !! ’ and smiled
 On the ruin—the woe—the confusion.

And where is that Eden?—O'whelm'd by the surge
 Of blood—'tis a desert of weeping,
 No songs are there heard but the tomb-circling dirge—
 'Tis night—and the murder'd are sleeping.
 See—that Spectre!—O yes! 'tis a widow who seeks
 The tenderest son of his mother—
 She has found him—and hark to the heart-rending shrieks!
 He was stabb'd by the hand of—a brother.

A tottering maiden, whose beautiful hair
 By the rough winds of heaven is dishevell'd—
 She looks for her lov'd one—her lov'd one is there,
 With the rest of the murder'd ones levell'd.
 She sinks on his ghastly remains, and her head
 Hangs o'er the deep gash on his forehead—
 And horrid although be the doom of the dead,
 The doom of the living's more horrid.

What a picture of wretchedness, terror, and crime,
 What confusion,—what chaos benighted!
 O weep with me—weep! that Christ's teachings sublime
 Are so shamefully scoff'd at and slighted!
 Weak-hearted one! Weep?—No! the trumpets aloud
 Are telling a fame-girded story—
 The banners are flying—the conquering crowd
 Are shouting the paeans of glory.

February 4, 1832.

THE TRINITARIAN INVESTIGATOR*.

THIS is the age of bold inquiry;—freedom from prejudice is fast ceasing to be considered as culpable audacity. The ample page of science is unrolled to the gaze of *the people*, that term being used in its widest sense. Forms and mystifications are falling into disrepute, and intelligibility is becoming more and more the order of the day. By the Hamiltonian method of teaching languages, the pedagogic mystery is half denuded, and the novice is initiated into the mazes of a foreign tongue by a process, which, as far as circumstances admit, resembles the action of nature in giving the desired familiarity through the medium of oral communication,—leaving technicalities until their necessity is comprehended, and until their acquirement is facilitated by the previous rapidly-gained and practical knowledge of the language.

Something like this simplicity of purpose is exhibited in this pamphlet. The author has no notion of being influenced by the

* The copious title runs as follows:—‘The Trinitarian Investigator; or a dispassionate Inquiry, addressed to certain public ministers in the Society of Friends, whether the opinions held by that society respecting the second person of the Trinity, are the peculiar doctrines of Christianity; or whether they are not inconsistent, contradictory, and derogatory of God; and the same as held by the Israelites, the Egyptians, and the heathens generally, long prior to Moses.’ By an unlearned Layman. Birmingham: J. Butterworth, and J. Drake. London: Teulon, Whitechapel.

previous conceptions of those who have preceded him. Independent of authorities, he cares nothing for the commonly-received or conventional meaning of a passage. He is *an unlearned Layman*,—that is to say, he is unambitious of the title of *scholar*; but he knows enough of *Greek* to look out for the meaning of words in his *Hederic*; of *Hebrew*, to seize and comprehend the connexions, etymological and otherwise, of words in that language; and he possesses shrewd acuteness and observation enough to enable him to detect and display the force and action of circumstances and events on the writer of the passage he discusses. Perceiving how important it is to consider written compositions as addressed to *contemporaries*, and not to *posterity*, he lays aside

‘All saws of books, all forms and pressures past,’
and becomes, as it were, the associate of Christ and the apostles—the living witness of their lives and conversation. He fearlessly turns from history to prophecy; compares narrative with epistolary allusion; looks the *mind* of his authors in the face; and, giving freely the result of his examination, he endeavours to place his readers also in the predicament of contemporary observers. Thus he is, in fact, scarcely a controversialist: he ‘delves a yard below the mines’ of controversy, and scatters the theories of his predecessors by the quiet assurance and simple boldness of his inferences and statements.

The author, it appears, ranks himself among the Society of *Friends*, and his spirit is especially stirred within him,—not that the individuals composing that society should hold opinions which he deems absurd and unscriptural, but that, as a body, they should enforce on others, as necessary to salvation, the reception of any creeds, articles, or forms of belief; and, above all, he is justly indignant, that, having themselves arrived at certain conclusions, they should, at the extremity of their own intellectual range, plant their terminal stumbling-block, warning their disciples generally, and their young friends especially, against any such rash attempts to acquire information, as may make them *too well* acquainted with doctrines which they, the ‘masters in Israel,’ choose to consider as heresy. For it is a melancholy fact, that the ‘people called quakers,’—the *soi-disant* followers of Penn and Barclay,—have latterly assumed a new phasis, have become as much attached to the comminatory authority of a ‘Quicunque vult’ as any *Athanasian* who rejoices to hear the oraculous formulary of his humanly-prescribed faith ‘said or sung in the churches’ of the established sect.

The state of Christian doctrine as commonly received, compared with the teaching of Christ and his apostles, is a wonder to many. We have, on the day of this present writing, listened to something relevant to this, from the lips of a most amiable minister of the gospel. ‘It is often asked,’ said he, ‘why has God not revealed his will to mankind, in such a manner that the

one, unquestioned, true meaning should be obvious to the comprehension of all? To this I answer, that the *essentials* of the Christian revelation *are* obvious to all—understood and acknowledged by all.' Now, to our simple comprehension, this is a state of imaginary unanimity; for, in fact, it is essential, *first*, to settle *what are essentials!* Of conduct, we should say, by the tenor and gist of the language of Scripture, the essentials are—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself'; or again, 'Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.' Of motives to this course of action, to assist the weakness of human nature, we lay hold on the assurance, that a steady perseverance in well-doing will entitle the humble aspirant after the divine favour to a happy immortality, as revealed, or amply ascertained, by the mission of that prophet, to whom was given 'the spirit without measure,' 'the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,' who himself rose from the dead, as the pledge and example of our resurrection.

'Nonsense!' exclaims the *orthodox* believer—churchman, quaker, or otherwise. 'Justice and mercy are filthy rags! and the man Christ Jesus will not do for us, however it might suit the apostolic age.' 'Pish!' says Rowland Hill, as quoted in the work before us*; 'your sermons have not a word of the *Gospel* in them; all your time is taken up with the duty of forgiving our enemies!' 'Hear me!' says the man of the Common Prayer Book; the taught of three creeds: 'Whosoever will be saved, must worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; must believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is *God* and *man*—*perfect God* and *perfect man*—yet not *two*, but *one* Christ;' and these things, and very many more, unless he believes, 'without doubt he shall *perish eternally*!'

Thus, then, there has accumulated a pretty considerable list of *articles of faith*, and of deep mysteries, which the good believer must not expect to comprehend, but must be content humbly to receive; and which, unless he does receive, his justice and his mercy, his benevolence, and his sedulous and humble attendance on the teachings of the man Christ Jesus, whatever the Scriptures may say, will avail him but little,—are not, in fact, *saving essentials*.

Upon this hint, then, speaks our 'Investigator.' He has read his Bible attentively, and declares positively that he finds no mysteries in it at all, whose reception is made obligatory on Christians, but that, *among the heathens*, on the contrary, there was a plentiful supply of mysteries, *i. e.*, of sublimated doctrines and recondite meanings, carefully hidden from the *profane*, the simple and unlearned, the poor and the babes, and revealed only to a few who were called *the initiated*; and that, in fact, those

* Village Dialogues, vol. ii., p. 196.

very tenets and dogmas which are now appealed to as the ‘*peculiar* doctrines of Christianity,’ are so far from deserving that title, that, to him, they appear heathenish, unscriptural, anti-christian, and the like; that they were *held by the heathens generally* long before the era of Moses; and that certain verbal and other coincidences were eagerly seized on by those to whom the gospel simplicity was a stumbling-block and a scandal; and that thus, these heathenish absurdities were laboriously interwoven into the variegated creeds of our present patchwork scheme of orthodoxy.

A Unitarian—we do not charge our ‘Investigator’ with being a *Unitarian* in the technical sense of the word, as one of a sect so called, but a believer in the divine unity—has this main advantage over all others, that, in controversy, he seeks not periphrases or circuitous illustrations. He goes at once, and confidently, to the straightforward and literal meaning of Scripture. He can fling his English and *authorized* version at the moon, and dive promptly into the profundities of the original, untroubled by any fear of what Greek, or Hebrew, or Syriac, can do unto him. ‘I am a disciple of Christ,’ says the Investigator; ‘I believe that Christ *personally taught* all that is necessary; and I believe that *all is necessary* which Christ personally taught to be so.’ This, on the face of it, seems sufficiently reasonable, but it is not enough for those who have a taste for *peculiar doctrines*. ‘They hold,’ says our author, ‘that our salvation was obtained by the omnipotent God of the universe being *made flesh*,’ and, by ‘the sufferings of the *flesh* of this God or Christ;’ that ‘atonement is made by the *flesh*, or the human body of God or of Christ suffering on the cross.’ Whereupon he declares, that the most perfectly distinctive appellations for such persons are ‘carnefidists, sarcopists, or flesh-trusting Christians,’ in opposition to those of simpler faith, who believe that ‘the spirit quickeneth,’ and whom he calls ‘spiritual Christians.’

Having declared in general terms his opinion of the nature of the orthodox faith, our Investigator proceeds through his subsequent chapters to dissect closely his doctrines. Quoting from Faber and others, he adduces the fact, that Trinitarian worship, *in the strictest sense of the term*, the adoration of one God in three persons, was practised long before the time of Moses, (p. 13.) These particulars are familiarly known to the theological student, but they are not often placed before the general reader; the coincidences, however, are too remarkable to be accidental, and we are glad to see them brought forward. This divinity, worshipped under different titles, said the heathen teachers, the Great Father, Adonis, Hessus, or Chrishna, was born of a virgin: his life was sought by a huge serpent, he was slain by the monster, but he finally conquered his adversary, and *crushed his head beneath his heel*. He was the mild and benevolent reformer of mankind, but was also the God of vengeance. He was prophet, priest, and king; the sacrificer as well as the sacrifice; being slain, he de-

scended into Hades, rose again on the third day, and was translated into heaven. He was called the Image of God, the Saviour, the Preserver, the Resurrection, the Eternal Life. 'These characteristics,' proceeds Faber, 'cannot have been borrowed from the history of Christ, for they were ascribed to the *Great Father* long before the advent of our Saviour.' What conclusion then is to be drawn from these singular similarities? The answer is appropriately given from sources similar to those whence the information is quoted, namely, *noted Trinitarian writers*.

'The half-converted heathens may have applied the fabulous history of *Adonis, Hessus, or Chrishna*, the Son, to the true or scriptural account of *Adon, Jesus, or Christ*, the Son. . . . For as T. H. Horne observes, "when the philosophers of Greece and Rome embraced the Christian religion, too many of them retained the tenets of their respective sects, and blended them with the pure religion of revelation." Tytler also says, "The early church suffered much from an absurd endeavour of the more learned of its votaries *to reconcile its doctrines* to the tenets of the pagan philosophers." Those priests who," says Faber, "were allowed to retain their ceremonies; those votaries of the *Great Father* who, embracing indeed Christianity, but unwilling to relinquish their long fostered superstitions, soon contended that *Jesus was but one of the manifestations of him*."

—p. 18.

Such, then, was the rise and progress of the Christian doctrine of the 'Trinity in Unity'; and thus, backed by unquestioned authorities, our author proceeds to discover, for every main point of modern orthodoxy, its archetype in elder heathenism. 'The Everlasting Jehovah *dying on the cross* ;' 'God *died* for us ;' 'The God of Nature *died* ;' 'For their Creator *dies* ;' 'My Saviour and my God,' (p. 21,) and scores of other quotations from received and generally venerated writers, are shown, so far from being illustrations of any doctrines *peculiar* to Christianity, to be mere plagiarisms from Pagan mythologists and poets. And some curious corollaries are drawn which would be ludicrous, did not their subject render them awful and distressing to the ingenuous mind. Thus, (p. 23.) 'As Christ was hungry and thirsty, as he ate and drank, was weary and slept, sighed and groaned, must not Jehovah have been a hungry, thirsty, eating, drinking, weary, sleepy, sighing, groaning God?' and the like propositions. 'Fie, this is profanity!' some reader exclaims. Be it so; it is, however, *inevitable* on the orthodox scheme, and it is proper that such doctrines, in all their bearings, should be well understood. Let therefore the orthodox look to it. The Investigator is free from the charge.

We are next led to the discussion of these 'peculiar doctrines,' as they are attempted to be proved from Scripture. First, from the proem to John's Gospel: 'The *Word* was GOD.' Good! but why, says the unlearned Layman, why must we believe that

the *Word* was also *Christ*? (p. 28.) What is the *Word*? ‘The Word,’ says Carne, ‘as John tells us, is God, God with God, as the Son of the Father:’ show us where John says so much. Again, says Graves, ‘Jesus must be God of God:’ show us your Scripture warrant for the assertion; and tell us the meaning of your words. ‘Is he God of, or superior to, Jehovah, or a God from Jehovah, or a God the companion and associate of Jehovah?’ (p. 28.)

Further, we read, (John x. 30,) ‘I and the Father are *one*;’ says J. J. Gurney, ‘He is therefore *God*.’ What then? asks our shrewd Layman, ‘When Jesus says, I ascend to my father, did he ascend in *one person* to himself, *in another person*? Did HE as man ascend to HIMSELF as *God*?’ (p. 36.)

Quitting John for Paul, our author quietly assumes, (p. 40,) that if, according to Peter, (Second Epistle, iii. 16,) the Apostle of the Gentiles wrote ‘some things hard to be understood’—and if the *gospel doctrine* be correctly described by its promulgator, as pure and simple, ‘hid from the wise and prudent, but revealed to the poor and to babes’—it were better to avoid reading what is unintelligible; for ‘is that gospel which *he* taught, who told us *he* was the way, the truth, and the life, so deficient in pointing out *the way, the truth, and the life*, that the *poor* cannot rely on that and that *alone* for salvation?’ Paul may be great, but Jesus is greater! and no further veneration is inculcated for the Apostle, by the Investigator, than his apostolic character claims. Instances are freely brought forward to show, that *unanimity*, even on the part of the Apostles, was by no means universal; and that one might, and did, not unfrequently oppose another; ‘withstand him to the face.’ Fearless, therefore, of consequences, and anxious only after truth, our Layman proceeds to the examination of various passages of apparent obscurity, but from which the difficulties usually vanish before the application of the simple recipe of *literal* translation.

Some sensible remarks follow, illustrative of the authority of the various versions of Scripture, and on the value of quotations from the *Old Testament* as cited by writers in the *New*; and the pamphlet closes with an able and laborious examination of Isaiah vii. 14, ‘Shall call his name *Emmanuel*.’ If no absolutely novel arguments are here brought forward, it is at least something to compress into eight octavo pages, the pith and marrow of what upwards of twenty quoted authors have advanced. ‘Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*,’ says the angel to Mary; ‘but,’ says the Layman in his cool way, ‘how the calling of his name *Jesus* fulfills the prophecy that he should be called *Emmanuel*, we are left to find out as we can.’ (p. 57.) And the conclusion is drawn in the words of Michaelis, ‘I cannot be persuaded that Isaiah vii. 14 has the least reference to the *Messiah*, but to a child that was to be born at the expiration of nine months, from a person, *at that time, a virgin*.’ (p. 64.)

Two other tracts are appended to the copy of the work before us, called forth by local circumstances ; in which, in the same independent tone, the author prolongs the discussion. Addressing his orthodox friends, he charges them with setting the Epistles of Paul, and the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, above the Gospel of Jesus. Defending the consistency of Paul on the one hand, he declares distinctly, that he would, in case of any real discrepancy, quit the banner of the Apostle, and betake himself to that of his greater *Master*.

Such then is the *Trinitarian Investigator* ; such the *Unlearned Layman*. Surely such a mode of conducting controversy must have its use. Fearless and downright, it is neither dazzled by the splendour of authority, nor checked by the prejudices of early association. Everything is reduced to its simple meaning, and doctrines are traced into their consequences. The author comes with a *fresh mind* to his subject, and exhibits it frequently in a new light. He is, however, sometimes excessive in his illustrations ; he knows not where to have done when a popular error is to be exposed. His work also is *hard reading*. It was obviously the aim of the author to write no useless word ; so that every period claims an unusual share of thought and attention. Such a work, however, with a few omissions, and such amplifications as would give it a more popular character, would be of signal service.

THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

"It is a happy world after all. The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence."—PALEY'S NAT. THEOL.

I looked on the morn—on the balmy morn
When the sunbeams danced on the waving corn,
And the east was tinged with a golden hue,
And the meadows glittered with pearls of dew,
And the birds that peopled each shrub and tree
Were warbling their tuneful melody :
And I said can it be, that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease ?
Oh ! think'st thou not that they clearly prove
His infinite mercy and endless love?

'Twas noon—and the freshness of morn was gone,
Yet strong and brilliant the sunbeams shone,
And a flood of glory around them streamed,
And the air with delightful fragrance teemed ;
All cloudless and pure was the azure sky,
And nature was vocal with strains of joy.
I said can it be, that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease ?
Are they not blessings designed to prove
A Father's mercy—a Father's love ?

"Twas night—and I looked on the spangled sky,
And the thousands of worlds that were rolling by ;
The moonbeams slept on the silver deep,
And the hum of voices was hushed in sleep,
Not a sound was heard, save the night-wind's sigh,
That whispered of peace and harmony.
And I said can it be, that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease ?
I will not, I cannot, believe it true,
While all these things are before my view.
Ah ! think'st thou not that they clearly prove
A Father's mercy—a Father's love ?

Manchester, 1831.

H. H.

ON REFINEMENT OF CHARACTER.

REFINEMENT of character arises from sensibility. It is that delicate perception of the feelings and wishes of others, which enables us to avoid whatever will give them pain, or be offensive to them, and to enter into their tastes, their sympathies, or aversions. It requires cultivation of mind, quickness of discernment, and a constant habit of observation to carry it to any perfection ; and even with all these, if it be not grounded on Christian principle, and connected with the exercise of the benevolent affections, it may be so far from being productive of good, that in some instances it has been known to be in itself a primary source of irritability and unhappiness. It is always so when *self* is the principal object of its attention ; when, instead of consulting the comfort, or increasing the enjoyment of others, entering into their situation, or attending to their wishes, it is occupied with a morbid anxiety about personal gratification, and a sickly sensibility to personal injuries ; for unless the self-command and amiable dispositions of a character preponderate, the cultivation of its perceptions and the acuteness of its taste are only so many new avenues to misery. If observation of human character, for instance, be principally directed to the faults and peculiarities of others, instead of resting on their virtues and valuable qualities, the more perfect such a perception is, the greater torment it must bring to its possessor. If it only enables us to see the weakness and imperfection of those around us in a more striking point of view, surely it were well exchanged even for obtuseness or ignorance. In this case, even those we love will not be exempted from our Argus-eyed scrutiny ; and everything in the conduct of others will be brought to judgment as it has a bearing on our own personal feelings, till at last we cease to value actions for their intrinsic beauty or merit, and become ourselves the standard by which we judge of others. Refinement is also something apt to give rise to an indifference to common blessings. In some characters it creates imaginary wants ; and they pass over the deep, rich, daily bounties of God's providence ; they forget the thankfulness due for them, in craving

some exalted and superior enjoyment, some feast of reason, some high excitement of mind, which too often ends in delusion and vexation. It is not in such pleasures that our daily duties will find their development; for the most refined will find they have duties, duties hard, serious, and laborious, and which cannot be neglected with impunity. In the performance of other tasks, when executed, we rest; but in the search for selfish gratification and amusement, there is a constantly increasing demand in proportion to the exertion. Fatigue is no obstacle, and disappointment is no obstacle; for, though wearied and disgusted, we do not suspect the true cause; and while we are daily becoming more cultivated and refined, we are not aware that, on the direction given to these new perceptions, does our increased happiness or misery depend. How different is Christian refinement! the refinement of a heart touched with the holiest and tenderest interest in the happiness of everything that lives. It is almost like a new sense: it is so kind, so intimate a sympathy in the welfare and comfort of human beings, that it opens a new world of the purest satisfaction—the most exalted and amiable feelings, to whoever will cultivate it. It adds a new power of doing good; it enables us to relieve without overpowering the unfortunate; to correct without wounding the erring; and to the daily intercourse of society it gives an inexpressible charm. It enables us to see what will make others happy, and to rejoice in being capable of doing it; to the exertions of intellect it bestows an additional relish; and whatever is noble or beautiful in human character is the object of its quick and delighted attention.

This is Christian refinement, and it is the only refinement worth cultivating; it does not depend on external circumstances, or artificial excitement; it is not easily offended, nor, with all its delicacy, easily disgusted; but in nature it everywhere perceives order and beauty unnoticed by others, and in the intellectual and moral world it finds a wide field for the exercise of faith, charity, and love. Where the selfish or the ignorant person possesses one source of enjoyment, a mind, thus cultivated, possesses a thousand; and, like the bee which extracts honey from the most unpromising flowers, it converts into good even the evils and the difficulties which it meets with. In the words of an amiable moralist of the present day*, ‘the man who is actuated by a feeling heart, as well as by a principle of duty, is prompt and ardent in rendering his aid to the wretched, because he enters completely into their feelings, and fully knows the bitterness of their hearts. He justly conceives the earnestness of those desires with which the wretched look around them for relief, and the bitter disappointment which they experience, when those, from whom they hoped for succour, only come to gaze upon them, and then pass on unmoved. He understands the full meaning of

* See *Systematic Morality*, vol. ii., p. 69.

the supplicating eye, and the still more eloquent language of the tear of gratitude. To such appeals he cannot be insensible. As strongly as he, if himself in adverse circumstances, would desire relief, so strongly does he feel impelled to offer it whenever the opportunity and the power are afforded him. He adds, moreover, to his benefits a tenfold value, by the manner in which they are bestowed. The wounded spirit feels his care not less than the injured frame or the destitute condition ; and as the oil and wine of the good Samaritan to the lacerated body of the perishing victim of violence, so do his words of consolation descend with healing influence upon the rended heart of the despairing mourner. No ostentatious display of generosity,—no attempt to enhance the magnitude of the benefit conferred, ever wounds the feelings of the object of his kindness ; he is anxious rather to lighten than augment the painful burden of obligation —rather to undervalue than to exaggerate the importance of his services ; he anticipates the wishes of the unhappy before they are expressed ; he reads in their looks those wishes which they are backward to express ; he shows, in short, in all his language and behaviour, that kind commiseration for their sorrows, and that delicate attention to their feelings, which adds to his benefits a value not to be estimated by their pecuniary amount, and excites a feeling of attachment and gratitude far beyond what wealth or power alone are able, by the most costly gifts, to purchase.¹ Thus do the sufferings of others call forth in such minds only more ardent benevolence and more persevering kindness. The removal of them, nay, the very endeavour to remove them, adds to the happiness and welfare of their being ; for they, and they only, can, as Mr. Jevons beautifully expresses it, ‘ find in every breast the chords which jar, and touch them, if touch them they must, with a gentle hand.’ Let us then, for our mutual comfort and enjoyment, try to cultivate this Christian refinement, so closely connected with our best moral interests ; and let us take heed that we never mistake for its healthy and improving influences, that morbid and fashionable delicacy which is the offspring of luxury and selfishness, and a narrow-minded anxiety about our own peculiar enjoyments and circumstances.

THE POOR AND THEIR POETRY*.

POETRY is not the privilege of a class, either in its production or its enjoyment. It belongs to humanity. Nature frames, without reference to rank, the internal organization from which it results, and scatters abroad, with profuse and universal bounty, the ex-

* 1. *Corn Law Rhymes*. 3d edition. London, 1831.

2. *The Village Patriarch*, a Poem, by the Author of *Corn Law Rhymes*. London, 1831.

3. *Love*, a Poem, by the same. 3d edition, London, 1831.

ternal excitements which act upon that organization, and make the well-strung harp give forth its music. Wherever there is man and nature, there may be poetry. But as this universal essence is rendered perceptible, it necessarily is subjected to various modifications. The life and soul of poetry are always the same; but to make them visible and tangible, they must become incarnate in various forms, which forms bear the peculiar features of age, class, or country. Nor is it more certain that the poetry of a rude and that of a civilized period, or of an oriental and a northern region, must exhibit appropriate diversities, than that, in the same country and the same generation, such diversities must also be found between the poetry of the rich and that of the poor, though both may possess the qualities which compel us to admit and to feel that they *are* poetry.

Poetry is a train of thoughts rich in pictorial and affecting associations. A thought or an expression is poetical, exactly in proportion to its power of calling up such associations. This power must evidently be varied by the peculiar mental habits of those who read or hear. There is much and noble poetry in our language, which only exists for scholars. The finest specimens of this kind are in Gray's 'Odes,' and in Milton's 'Paradise Lost.' He only feels the full force of the one who is thoroughly familiar with the history of his country; or of the other, who feels a classical allusion, as if it were a vernacular idiom. The power of a poet who is a scholar, over readers who are scholars also, is indefinitely multiplied. It includes the power of all the other poets whom he thus makes for the time the satellites of his own genius; presenting to the mind not only the picture which his own fancy has sketched, but including in it, and calling up by it, the productions of all those, his allusion to whom, though it be but in the turn of a phrase, is understood and felt. And so the historical Odes of Gray—besides those bold and rapid sketches which occupy the foreground of the painting—exhibit, by allusion to the narrative, in long and shadowy perspective, the poetical characters and facts of history. The effect of allusion in poetry is like that of a combination of mechanical powers. It invests one man with the strength of many. When poetry, that is to say, when man shall arrive at perfection, its wealth in allusion will be most ample and boundless. It does not, however, follow that the poetry which is now most endowed with this quality is the best poetry. As all machinery, however powerful, requires living strength to set it in motion, so allusion will accomplish little, unless it be worked by the living strength of originality.

The highest order of poetical associations must, after all, be sought in natural objects and human emotions. He will never work upon the soul by his allusions, who fails to affect it by his original conceptions. Yet those who can appreciate classical and historical allusions will be disposed to accept them to some extent

as a compensation for other kinds of merit, and to require them in the poetry which they most enjoy. Poetry, distinguished by this quality, is therefore peculiarly the poetry of the educated, who must also be the wealthier classes of the community. It is poetry which the poor, because they are also the uneducated, can neither produce nor enjoy.

Let it not be thought for an instant that poetry and poverty are words which can only be forced into combination. The poetry of the poor exists abundantly, in every sense of the expression. Poetry has taken them for its subjects; has painted their rags and wretchedness, their crimes and sufferings; and the world has gazed intently on the picture, and done homage to its truth and power. Even now its worth has received that melancholy increase which Death, the usurer, bestows on works of art by his mighty power of accumulation. ‘The Borough’ scenery of Crabbe takes its place amongst the productions of departed masters. He was the poet of the poor. But although he was their poet, he was not himself of them. He looked at them from without, and from above. He makes us sympathize, not in what they feel, but in what he himself feels in the contemplation of their emotions. It is poetry concerning the poor, but neither by the poor, nor for the poor. It is made up of observation and sympathy. The poetry of the poor should be something more than this. It should be the language, not of the observant and pitying gentleman, but of humanity in poverty, pouring forth its own emotions for its own gratification.

That such poetry exists would, in the absence of all other evidence, be abundantly demonstrated by the volumes before us. The fact, indeed, that poetry has always arisen at an early stage of the progress of society towards civilization, shows that the appetite for it exists in uncultivated minds. Poetry is the first form of literature; song is the sorrowing or joyous cry of intellect before it has yet attained the distinct articulation of science. And if the poor of populous communities are below the savage in much that tends to develop and delight the imagination; if, too often, they have scarcely more than he has of direct mental cultivation, there is the compensating advantage of the indirect influences upon them of all the soul which has been generated and exhibited in the progress of mankind towards the social condition in which they exist. The poor labourer, considering only his toil, his poverty, and his ignorance, is not so poetical a being in himself, or to others, as the American Indian, or as the Greeks or the Goths were, when they were at a similar point in the scale of social advancement. But untaught though he be, he is one of the people to whom Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton belonged; and in some degree the power is over him of that which has raised the mind of the community, although he knows it not, and we may not be able to indicate

the operation and the result with mechanical precision. He breathes the mental air which they have purified. Though it may have been doled out to him with a niggardly hand, he has yet received a portion of that national character, which they contributed to form. He can enjoy poetry, for he is a man and an Englishman. What has always been, so far as it was their spontaneous choice and purchase, the library, even at the smallest, of the cottage of the poorest? We say spontaneous, for we put out of the question the tracts and good books, which, being given by superiors, must be accepted. For many a generation the minimum of the poor man's library has at least contained three volumes, his bible, his hymn-book, and the Pilgrim's Progress—all poetry, each in its way, and cherished by him, though he may not be aware of the fact, because they are poetry as well as religion. The religion of the poor is always poetry; their idolatries of old were poetical; their superstitions in the middle ages were poetical; their present version of Christian theology is poetical; nor will the advocates of a truer and purer version of that religion succeed in rendering it popular, until they feel themselves, and display to others, its superiority, not only in logical consistency but in imaginative beauty. The bible itself is at once the highest source and the highest gratification of poetical taste. It embodies so powerfully the elements of universal poetry, which appeal to humanity in all countries, that it has borne triumphantly along with them the peculiar characteristics of the region in which it originated, and orientalized the associations of Christendom. If to this little library the means of increase are afforded, it is generally in directions which justify our inference from its original character. Extend education, extend reading, strengthen and enlarge the mind, and poetry 'grows with its growth, and strengthens with its strength.' There is then, in this sense also, a poetry of the poor. And if they possess the principles of its enjoyment, they must also, they do, in them possess the materials for its production.

All the world knows, that some of the very highest names in every department of intellectual achievement are those of men who have sprung from the lowliest origin. This has pre-eminently been the case in mathematical science, while it has been common also both in the fine and useful arts, in law, literature, politics, theology, and even in poetry. But in their elevation they have also acquired that education, which we have assumed as generally distinguishing the rich from the poor. They have thus qualified themselves to produce the kind of composition which we have characterized as the poetry of the wealthier classes. The distinction of classes has been overwhelmed in these splendid developments of humanity. Such was Akenside, who, as our author justly says, 'breathed the soul of Plato into British song.' In such cases as these, the individuals had ceased to be poor and of

the poor. They had acquired the tastes, habits, feelings, associations, modes of thought, of the more elevated classes; and lost, at least in some degree, or modified thereby, those which peculiarly belong to their original condition. And this remark applies to poets generally, however proverbial may have been their poverty. What we desiderate as, in this sense, the poetry of the poor, must emanate from men who remain surrounded by the scenery, partakers of the privations, subject to the wrongs, real or imaginary, and animated by the passions and hopes, which belong exclusively to poverty. This is rarely to be expected, because talent will infallibly educate itself, and will almost as infallibly rise in society. It has thus fallen into the train or into the ranks of aristocracy. It has been taken from its den to be tamed, and trained, and domesticated in a mansion. If excellence has been attained, it has not been excellence bearing the peculiar stamp of the poet's native station; all traces of that have been deemed blemishes and carefully obliterated. In former times, the poet was pensioned by some noble patron,—he has now the better patronage of a reading public; but in either case, he ceases to be identified with those who are now commonly described, and who begin to glory in the name, with a portentous pride, as *the working classes*.

The author now before us has had but one predecessor,—ROBERT BURNS; for we set no store by the twaddling verses of sundry rhyming laundresses, dairymaids, and butlers, who have been cockered into a very transitory reputation by the pious charity of some well-disposed and respectable persons, who found their milk-and-water effusions congenial with their own mental and moral mediocrity. When Apollo and the Muses sojourn, as they sometimes do, in the cells of poverty, it is certainly not that they may be sent to an adult Sunday school, be put into livery, and the whole marched to church to sing a hymn of thanksgiving, composed expressly for the occasion by Mrs. Hannah More, in honour of the condescending benevolence towards them of the upper classes. From Taylor the water-poet, who was a very sponge, down to the latest concoction of rhyme in the pantry and the kitchen-garden, there is nothing of this description that can be read with patience, or rather that can be read without patience. The productions of these people are usually the humble reflections of the tastes of their masters and mistresses. Bloomfield and Clare are of a far better order, though not of the highest order; they belong to a ‘bold peasantry;’ what they have done, they have done well. But the genuine poverty of society does not live in the fields. Its horrors and its passions, in their sternest form, are city born. Let there be meadows and mountains, but there must also be streets, alleys, workshops, and jails, to complete the scenery of the poetry of poverty. By neglecting these, Bloomfield and Clare have lost the best subjects

for their best powers. We should rather say, perhaps, that they only occupy an inferior rank, because their mental constitutions were not matured by city poverty to qualify them for the most powerful composition in this species of poetry. They are too merely pastoral,—their subjects are not soul-stirring,—they deal in what Burns despised :—

‘ Shepherds’ pipes, Arcadian strains,
And fabled tortures, quaint and tame.’

But Burns was quite another-guess sort of man. He first saw, in their real nature and extent, the peculiar topics of the poet of poverty, and prepared the way for the yet more extended range which has been taken by our author. The education which he obtained for himself was not that which passes for education with the wealthy and fashionable : he seldom wandered towards the region of classicality, and when he did he was sure to lose himself. Rightly did he repent of having ever put such names as Chloris and Daphne into his nervous rhymes. A few good English books, histories, essays, and poems, these he devoured, ‘ unmixed with baser matter,’ or with foreign matter ; and his strong constitution became all the stronger. The leading topics of his poetry are precisely those which, without reference to an individual instance, we should have marked out as the proper themes for one who would achieve the highest honours of the poet of poverty. They are what we have already referred to as the universal elements of poetry, freed from the modifications which belong to an educated taste, and coloured with the modifications which belong to the condition of those who toil. He looked on nature with the freshness of a first love. The mountain on whose outline he gazed was not to him a peg on which to hang school quotations and allusions. The emotions with which rocks, woods, and streams inspired him, were, like the rocks themselves, primary, and not secondary. They were not the *debris* of an old world of poetry. His associations with scenery were those of humanity. With the exception of a little Scotch history, he sang nature as Adam would have sung it, had Adam been created a poet. Nor was his love, the next great universal topic, much more conventional ; although it must be deplored that he lowered it towards the degraded regions of physical instinct. He loved as also Adam would have loved, had there been twenty Eves in the world instead of one ; but Adam was only a natural man,—Burns was also a poor man. When he looked on the fields, he felt that they were appropriated ; when he loved, he therefore also hated. Whether animate or inanimate, he sang of beauty as he felt it, and of oppression too, in the language of keen perception and intense passion. For Burns was a politician : his clear mind saw at once the absurdity of excluding from poetry the subjects by which social man is most engrossingly occupied, and most stormily agitated ; he set the example of writing on these subjects, not as the laureate of a

party, but as the Tyrtaeus of humanity ; he would have told prince, peer, or potentate, as readily as he has told the masses and the millions, and with as little of insolence as of sycophancy, that ‘ a man’s a man for a ’ that.’

The author of the volumes before us is said to be a working man of the name of Elliot, somewhere in the north. On this point, posterity will be better informed than we are at this present moment. We will answer for it that his name will be known long enough and wide enough. His poems have been slowly making their way into notice, but the attention which they gain they are sure to keep. His three volumes are devoted, in succession, to what we have indicated as the three great topics of the poetry of Burns. Politics predominate in the *Corn Law Rhymes*; his perception of the beauties of nature is most exhibited in the *Village Patriarch*; and his last publication is, as its title declares, on *Love*. His education, self-taught we may presume, is also precisely of the description which we have pointed out, as adapted to enrich the poetry without destroying or transforming the peculiar feelings and mental habits of the poor man. We had seen the *Corn Law Rhymes*, now in the third edition, occasionally advertised and noticed, but hastily concluded, from the title, that it was merely a collection of political squibs in middling verse, and were quite unprepared for the grand poetical prospect which burst upon us when we opened the volume. It is not merely that the distress which is described in many of these poems must of itself, if told without affectation, produce a powerful effect upon the feelings ; or that there is something sublime in the stern wrath of those who feel themselves to be wronged by power, insulted by pride, and half-starved by monopoly ; it is not merely that we meet with many passages which have all the caustic humour of the epigrams of Burns, and the crushing satire of Byron’s ‘ Age of Bronze ;’ but there is intermingled with all, and pervading and elevating all, the imagination of a genuine poet,—an imagination that, while it gilds the stormy clouds of passion, is yet ever aspiring towards the pure air and sunny light of heaven as its native elements and its final rest.

‘ O that my poesy were like the child
That gathers daisies from the lap of May,
With prattle sweeter than the bloomy wild !
It then might teach poor Wisdom to be gay,
As flowers, and birds, and rivers, all at play,
And winds, that make the voiceless clouds of morn
Harmonious. But distempered, if not mad,
I feed on nature’s bane, and mess with scorn.
I would not, could not if I would, be glad,
But, like shade-loving plants, am happiest sad.
My heart, once soft as woman’s tear, is gnarl’d
With gloating on the ills I cannot cure.’

Village Patriarch, p. 53,

How little appear the commonplace attempts which are continually made to excite pity and horror, by the fall of princes and nobles, by tales of inquisitorial racks and tortures, by bloody murders and grim ghosts, compared with the homely and unpretending power of an ‘owre true tale’ as told by a poet :

THE DEATH-FEAST.

‘ The birth-day, or the wedding-day,
 Let happier mourners keep ;
To death my festal vows I pay,
 And try in vain to weep.
 Some grieves the strongest soul might shake,
 And I such grief have had :
My brain is hot—but they mistake
 Who deem that I am mad.
My father died, my mother died,
 Four orphans poor were we ;
My brother John work’d hard, and tried
 To smile on Jane and me.
 But work grew scarce, while bread grew dear,
 And wages lessened too,
For Irish hordes were bidders here
 Our half-paid work to do.
Yet still he strove, with failing breath
 And sinking cheek, to save
 Consumptive Jane from early death—
 Then joined her in the grave.
His watery hand in mine I took,
 And kissed him till he slept :
O, still I see his dying look !
 He tried to smile, and wept !
I bought his coffin with my bed,
 My gown bought earth and prayer ;
I pawned my mother’s ring for bread,
 I pawned my father’s chair.
My Bible yet remains to sell,
 And yet unsold shall be ;
 But language fails my woes to tell—
 Even crumbs were scarce with me.
I sold poor Jane’s gray linnet then,
 It cost a groat a-year ;
I sold John’s hen, and missed the hen
 When eggs were selling dear ;
For autumn nights seemed wintry cold,
 While seldom blazed my fire,
And eight times eight no more I sold
 When eggs were getting higher.
But still I glean the moor and heath ;
 I wash, they say, with skill ;
And workhouse bread ne’er crossed my teeth—
 I trust it never will.

But when the day on which John died
Returns with all its gloom,
I seek kind friends, and beg, with pride,
A banquet for the tomb.
One friend, my brother James, at least
Comes then with me to dine;
Let others keep the marriage-feast,
The funeral feast is mine.
For then on him I fondly call,
And then he lives again!
To-morrow is our festival
Of death, and John, and Jane.
Even now, behold! they look on me,
Exulting, from the skies,
While angels round them weep to see
The tears gush from their eyes!
I cannot weep—Why can I not?
My tears refuse to flow:
My feet are cold, my brain is hot—
Is fever madness? No.
Thou smilest, and in scorn—but thou,
Couldst thou forget the dead?
No common beggar curtsies now,
And begs for burial bread.'

Magnificent as is the indignation of our author at the heartless extortion which taxes the means of universal support, we yet like his ‘countenance more in sorrow than in anger;’ and his kindlier emotions have paid a more than just, a generous tribute, to the memory of one whose name we take to be more honoured by the following lines, than by all the senatorial eulogies which have been pronounced in St. Stephen’s, or by all the marble which may be raised, sculptured, and inscribed, in Westminster Abbey.

ELEGY.

‘ Oh, Huskisson! oh, Huskisson!
Oh, Huskisson! in vain our friend!
Why hast thou left thy work undone?
Of good begun is this the end?
Thou shouldst have lived, if they remain
Who fetter’d us, and hated thee.
Oh, Huskisson! our friend in vain!
Where now are hope and liberty?
Thou shouldst have lived, if with thee dies
The poor man’s hope of better days.
Time stops to weep; but yet shall rise
The sun whose beams shall write thy praise.
Thy widow weeps—but what is she,
And what her paltry, common woe?
Worlds weep—and millions fast for thee
Our hope is gone!—why didst thou go?

Pleased hell awhile suspends his breath,
 Then shouts in joy, and laughs in hate ;
 And plague, and famine, call on death
 Their jubilee to celebrate.
 A shadow bids improvement stand,
 While faster flow a nation's tears.
 Oh, dead man ! with thy pallid hand
 Thou rollest back the tide of years !'

Corn Law Rhymes, pp. 37, 38.

If the last two lines be not poetry, why then 'the pillared firmament is rottenness.'

The Village Patriarch is the description of a man, poor, blind, and old, a man of five-score years, of his person, his recollections, his sensations, walks, talks, dreams, and death; death which, as the bailiffs invade his cottage, and the workhouse opens its doors, sets free 'the last of England's high-soul'd poor.' The beauty of the descriptions with which this poem abounds are enhanced and made more affecting by frequent reference to the patriarch's blindness. The loss of sight is not that of sensation.

' Yet sweet to him, ye stream-loved valleys lone,
 Leafless, or blossoming fragrant, sweet are ye ;
 For he can hear the wintry forest groan,
 And feel the beauty which he cannot see,
 And drink the breath of Nature, blowing free !
 Sweet still it is through fields and woods to stray ;
 And fearless wanders he the country wide,
 For well old Enoch knows each ancient way ;
 He finds in every moss-grown tree a guide,
 To every time-dark rock he seems allied,
 Calls the stream Sister, and is not disown'd.'

Village Patriarch, p. 7.

Both in this poem and in the 'Love,' there is a sustained excellence of versification, thought and imagery, which is very unusual. He never drops, as the songs of Burns sometimes do, from the verse which was inspired to the verse which is manufactured. His mind is healthful and vigorous; always knows its work, and does its work; and the prominent passages are such as the subject naturally throws out, not such as are elaborated and polished with infinite pains for the production of effect. What is not quoted is as good as what is quoted; and the most impressive and beautiful passages are, as they ought to be, and as every one knows the best scenes of Shakspeare are, so connected with, and dependent for their effect upon the entire piece of which they form a portion, as to appear to positive and great disadvantage in quotation. His stories and his sketches of character, both of which are frequently introduced, are so good, that we only regret not having space to give specimens of them, which we will not introduce because we cannot present them

entire. We must make room for the poor boy, Chantrey, from the poem of Love :

'The worm came up to drink the welcome shower ;
The redbreast quaff'd the rain-drop in the bower ;
The flaskering duck through freshen'd lilies swam ;
The bright roach took the fly below the dam ;
Ramp'd the glad colt, and cropp'd the pensile spray ;
No more in dust uprose the sultry way ;
The lark was in the cloud ; the woodbine hung
More sweetly o'er the chaffinch while he sung ;
And the wild rose from every dripping bush,
Beheld on silvery sheaf the mirror'd blush ;
When calmly seated on his pannier'd ass,
Where travellers hear the steel hiss as they pass,
A milk-boy, sheltering from the transient storm,
Chalk'd, on the grinder's wall, an infant form :
Young Chantrey smiled ; no critic praised or blamed ;
And golden promise smiled, and thus exclaimed :
" Go, child of genius ! rich be thine increase ;
Go—be the Phidias of the second Greece ! "

Greece ! thou art fallen, by luxury o'erthrown,
Not vanquish'd by the Man of Macedon !
For ever fallen ! and sculpture fell with thee.
But from the ranks of British poverty
A glory hath burst forth, and matchless powers
Shall make th' eternal grace of sculpture ours.
Th' eternal grace ? alas ! the date assign'd
To works, call'd deathless, of creative mind,
Is but a speck upon the sea of days ;
And frail man's immortality of praise
A moment to th' eternity of Time,
That is, and was, and shall be, the sublime,
The unbeginning, the unending sea,
Dimensionless as God's infinity.'—*Love*, pp. 18, 19.

We must observe that, in his love strains, he is no ' ranting Robin ;' but that his morality must be allowed by all to be sound on all points, except with those who will condemn his ' gall of bitterness' towards the aristocracy, and not allow his plea that it comes from one of those who are held, by that aristocracy, in 'bonds of iniquity.' His theology, too, so far as it appears, has the simplicity and truth which naturally belong to the theology of poetry, when poetry lives in the light of cultivated intelligence. While, generally speaking, his ' song is but the eloquence of truth,' and its materials are the merest matters of fact, he has made occasional excursions into the regions beyond, has shown that he ' can call spirits from the vasty deep,' and in all the humbleness of his name, station, and subjects, compete with the crowned bards who have waved the wand of magic and commanded the regions of the air ; ' Brutus will raise a spirit as soon as Cæsar.'

' He waked not, though a hand unearthly drew
 The curtains of his bed, and to the hue
 Of ashes changed his cheek. With open eyes
 He slumber'd still ; but speechless agonies
 Wrought on his face convulsed his heart's despair,
 And terror smote his damp, uplifted hair.
 His spirit felt a spirit's strong control,
 An injured spirit whisper'd to his soul :

No worm slinks down when I approach,—

No night-bird stints his ditty ;
 Yet will I mourn thee, though unheard,
 For now my love is pity.
 Again I'll hear thee talk of truth,
 When Rother's rose is sweetest ;
 Again I'll meet thee, perjured one,
 When thou thy new love meetest.

While stars in silence watch my dust,
 I'll sigh, where last ye parted,
 O'er her who soon shall droop, like me,
 Thy victim, broken-hearted.

And in that hour, to love so dear,
 The stillest and the fleetest,
 Unfelt I'll kiss my rival's cheek,
 When Rother's rose is sweetest.'—*Love*, pp. 50, 51.

The great difficulty of the supernatural is mastered here, and a state of mind, of which the conception is most original, and which is most strange and unnatural to humanity, is made to commend itself to our inmost hearts as true to the nature of a disembodied spirit. The passage is free from that exaggeration which is the greatest blemish by which these volumes are disfigured.

We must now take leave of our author, in the hope of an early and of frequent meetings. His poetry, in the view which we have taken of it, is no trifling matter. It is one of the signs of the times. The wealthy, the literary, the powerful, employ themselves about many things which are of far less moment. These 'rhymes' are no cold coruscations flitting about, like the northern lights, in a dim and distant region, for idle people to gaze at. They are intense flashes of liquid lava from that central fire, which must have vent, or its expansion will shiver to atoms the great globe itself. The intellect of poverty is too powerful, and too impetuous, to be bound within the narrow confines of the condition of poverty : already the pressure has broken down those boundaries in the direction of political right. But this is only a portion of the great change which is going forward. We do not mean that the wealthy will be plundered, the property of the country divided, or any of the other wild schemes be realized which madmen desire, and foolish men dread. We trust, the world is doomed to no such unspeakable calamities, but to a progression of good, which, beginning with intelligence, and advancing to freedom, will

not stop, till it rests in happiness; in happiness far more equally diffused over the whole surface of the country, than has ever yet been allowed to be the case by partial institutions. We may yet have to pass through a stormy period in which indignation will demand, and apprehension concede, and both misunderstand the real value of what is given and taken; but experience will successively cast down from their altars many social idols which are now worshipped, and discover that many supposed injuries are real interests—until, at length, the forms and operations of government shall be directed solely to the benefit of the whole, the production of the greatest happiness to the greatest number.

THE IRISH TITHE QUESTION*.

DR. HINCKS has published a most interesting and important pamphlet on the great national question of tithes, as it affects Ireland in particular. It is important for its accurate information and powerful reasoning—it is, perhaps, still more important as expressing the deliberate opinion, that the Irish church must be altogether deprived of its endowments, of one who appears to be sincerely and devotedly attached to that church as to its constitution and doctrine, and who has been led to his conclusion, not by abstract views of justice towards other sects, or by any doubt as to the expediency of an endowed church where it can be obtained, but by a practical conviction, from experience and extensive observation, that the peace of Ireland can be secured only by the sacrifice of its national church. This worthy clergyman does not think that the nation should be sacrificed to the church, or that it can be either expedient or lawful to support even the purest religion by violence or bloodshed. He would rather throw his church, like other religious sects, on the voluntary exertions of its friends, though preferring a legal provision where it can be had, than preserve its revenues, were that possible, at the risk of deluging his country with blood, or even of keeping it in a state of constant uneasiness and irritation. He sees clearly, that the half-measure, which seems to be contemplated by his Majesty's ministers, is impracticable; and supposing it carried into effect, would answer no useful purpose, the chief objection felt to the tithes being, not the kind of payment, but the payment for the benefit of the clergy of a church, which is that of a very small proportion of the people. Whilst the church continues on its present footing, Ireland cannot have peace; but there is a compromise—a middle course—for which many contend, and which appears to be favourably regarded by some dis-

* What is to be done with the Tithes in Ireland? The Question answered by Edward Hincks, D.D., Rector of Killyleagh.

tinguished statesmen. Let the revenues of the church, it is said, be participated with the Catholics ; let the church of the many enjoy the benefit as well as the church of the few, and all subject of complaint will be removed. Against this plan Dr. Hincks most earnestly protests, and we agree with him, though not precisely on the same grounds. He appears to be chiefly influenced by his horror of the Roman Catholic religion. We are more impressed with the absurdity of a government, in fulfilment of the alleged duty of supporting the cause of religion, supporting at the same time several opposing systems of religion, the friends of each one of which regard all the others as dangerous and pernicious—so that, in the opinion of all the parties, what is given with one hand, is counteracting the good effect of what is given with the other ; and the gross injustice of selecting two or three sects for public patronage, whilst all other religionists are excluded. We hope, too, that the Catholics have formed juster views of their own interests than to allow of any dependence of their clergy on the state. The next question is, *when* the church should lose its revenues. Dr. Hincks, we think justly, maintains the rights of present incumbents. There are few who would think of any thing so monstrous as their entire deprivation, and we think it evident, that even the taking away of a part of what they enjoy would be gross injustice.

The church revenues are a national property—the tithes as much so as the lands ; they having been parted with for ever by the landlords in very early times, and all transfers of property for ages having been made with reference to their existence as a permanent charge. It is the will of the nation, expressed in Parliament, which has appropriated these national funds to the support of the Protestant church, and prescribed the terms on which individuals should hold the share allotted to them. Every such individual has received from the nation an office, in some cases we may say a sinecure—but that makes no difference in the argument—for life. The nation has entered into a contract with him—an unwise one if you please—but still a contract, and cannot break that contract without real injustice. Every incumbent has a life interest, and ought to be secured against plunder. Nor is what he enjoys taken unjustly from others. The nation has not acquired the tithe property without giving value for it. It has acquired and has long held that property. A landlord receives his estates subject to this charge, and has no more right to what has been customarily paid as tithe, than we have to the remainder of his rents. That the tithe really falls upon the landlord, not upon the tenant, or the consumer, and that rents must rise if tithe were abolished, so as to make the landlord the real gainer, is demonstrable *. The clergyman does not claim from his parish-

* The Editor dissents from his correspondent's view of this subject. Tithe is a tax which, like other taxes, falls upon the consumer, and, like other taxes, may be

ioners, as a compensation for service done to them, but as the legal holder for the time of a certain portion of the national funds due from them, and given to him by the nation upon certain conditions, which he has not violated. The remarks as to the ancient division of tithes are totally irrelevant as an objection to the claims of the present clergyman. The facts are important in the history of tithes, and are important against the claim of divine right, or of an unalienable property belonging to the church as a corporation; but they furnish no argument against the only tenable claim of the Protestant clergy, their being put in the enjoyment of a certain portion of national funds by the will of the nation, declared by act of parliament. The revenues of the church, then, ought to be withdrawn, by allowing no single claim upon tithe, or title to any church lands to be conferred after a certain day, and then allowing the present claims to die out.

To abolish tithes would be an act of madness, as it would be to make a present of a great national property to one portion of the community—the landholders—to the direct loss of all the other portions. Let them be commuted into a form of property, which will not be a restraint on improvement, and will not invite to oppression in its collection; but let them be carefully guarded for national purposes. Dr. Hincks argues clearly and powerfully to show that nothing less than entirely depriving (prospectively at least) the church of its revenues will restore peace to the country; that it is vain to deny the power of parliament to do this; that in doing it the rights of incumbents must in justice be respected; and that what is taken from the church must be otherwise employed for the public benefit,—not suffered to fall into the hands of the landlords. What we regret in the pamphlet is the bitterness with which the Catholics are everywhere spoken of. Towards them the author manifests neither candour nor charity. Their errors he describes as soul-destroying; their priests he seems to suppose to be always actuated by fraud and malignity. This is very bad. Such bigotry would anywhere deserve severe censure; but we cannot help particularly regretting that it should deform, and perhaps lessen the influence of, a work so important in the present crisis as that of Dr. Hincks's. We hope the Catholics will have the sense to perceive that, though he speaks of them harshly and unjustly, the author proposes the very measure which is really most for their advantage: and one good will at least result from what is objectionable in his language, that no

repealed by the legislature, or its proceeds differently applied, whenever the interests of the community so require. Such at least is the doctrine of our ablest political economists; and their arguments are before the public. As to the incumbent, though in the event of any change his situation ought to be liberally considered, he is still only a hired servant; he may be cashiered for misconduct; more work may be required of him; and his employer (the nation) may at any time, due regard being had to the claims of humanity, re-model his household, and apportion on a different principle both work and wages.

one can suppose his proposals to have their origin in favourable feelings towards the Catholics. He gives up the temporalities of the church, because he sees that they cannot be retained consistently with the public peace; and he hopes the church may do without them, as the Catholics and Dissenters now do. But he regrets what he proposes to give up; and whilst he recommends to render the Catholics justice by placing all sects upon an equal footing, he evidently regards their doctrines with all that extravagance of abhorrence which characterizes the zealous Irish Protestant.

The contents of the pamphlet are well worth the hour that will be occupied in its perusal, and we earnestly recommend it to the attention of our readers.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

THEOLOGY, CRITICISM, AND MORALITY.

The Claims of Unitarian Christianity to the Respectful Consideration of the Reflecting Public. The Substance of Two Sermons delivered in York Street Chapel, St. James's Square, on Sunday, January 22d, 1832. By E. Tagart, London; Hunter, Eaton.

IN a bland and earnest manner, devoid of the least tendency to irritate, repel, or annoy any class of Christians, Mr. Tagart invites attention to a faith which he shows, both by his spirit and his arguments, to be at least worthy of serious investigation. One would imagine that only those who first closed their ears or eyes could succeed in shutting their minds against such pleadings. He argues the claims of Unitarian Christianity from the history of its rise and progress in modern times; from the character of its advocates; and from the facts, that the Bible has been always and alone its foundation and support; that its doctrines are no other than those which all sects and churches in Christendom agree in receiving; that it preserves unsullied and unembarrassed the great truth of the Divine Unity; that it lays unqualified stress upon the importance of holiness, repentance, and good works; that it harmonizes with nature around us, and the world within us; and that it connects itself with human improvement and happiness. These particulars are illustrated in a judicious, candid, and conciliatory manner. We prefer, however, extracting the following useful remarks from the introductory part of the first discourse:—

‘What I now desire particularly to urge is, that few persons are aware how much they owe it to themselves to seek information from all quarters,—to strive continually to add to their knowledge by their own reading, observation, and experience, and to be cautious how they take up and indulge notions, and prejudices, which tend merely to strengthen their present impressions, and to shut out new and enlarging views of the surrounding world. Few persons are aware, how much, by so doing, they might contribute to the harmony of society.

and the improvement of mankind. The party and sectarian connexions, in which all are more or less involved, sadly encourage a tendency to confine our minds within the range of a certain set of influences and views, and to look with a sort of contempt and hostility upon all who do not come within this range, who do not immediately harmonize with all our ideas and prepossessions. Now, this sort of spirit, this hasty and contemptuous conclusion, that nothing good can come out of certain places and persons, is most unchristian and unworthy, as well as an injustice to ourselves. What are the errors and weaknesses of our fellow-creatures, but the *misfortunes of humanity*, the diseases of the soul, which demand at least a compassionate consideration from us, and which we must, first of all, endeavour to understand, if, as in duty bound, we would labour successfully to cure and remove them? It is astonishing how much the influence of mere names is concerned in fomenting the spirit of party and of prejudice. The title of the sect to which a man belongs is, with many persons, the grand badge of distinction to render him worthy or unworthy of sympathy and esteem. The broad relationship of Christian is forgotten in the minor divisions of Calvinist, Baptist, Methodist, Quaker, and Socinian. The names of Unitarian, Freethinker, and Deist, awaken in many minds sentiments of indefinite horror, which leave them no power to ascertain what there really is to dread,—no wish to discover any thing to admire.

How often is the secret dread of the Unitarian found to be connected with an entire ignorance of what he is or believes; just as the child of superstition trembles at an object in the dark, which he would view with associations of pleasure in the day! So true is this, that I have known a simple explanation of our views of Christian doctrine produce, not only an instantaneous change of opinion, but the exclamation ‘These views are mine!’—pp. 7, 8.

Bigotry Reproved; a Series of Letters in Reply to the Rev. Nicholas Armstrong, A. B. By the Rev. Noah Jones. Fox, London.

THESE letters, seven in number, appeared in ‘The Northampton Free Press’ during the months of September, October, November, and December last. Nos. 2 and 4 are from Mr. Armstrong; the remainder by Mr. Jones. The former, on his visit to Northampton, where he was speaking and preaching as an ‘agent of the Reformation Society,’ had drawn upon himself the charge of ‘attacking every denomination of Christians but the Church of England.’ To this charge he replied, in the newspaper above-mentioned; and to the general plea of not guilty, appended the following remark:—‘I spoke a little, indeed, in defence of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and against the Unitarian blasphemy. This you shall not be able to construe into vituperation of all Christian denominations, until you shall be able to prove the Unitarian a Christian, which never can be done.’ This Mr. Jones did, however, in his first letter, claiming his right of private judgment, as the Church of England did at the Reformation; appealing to the Scriptures; and reminding his antagonist that he himself ‘must establish his Christian character upon the doctrines which Unitarians receive, not on those they *reject*; doctrines expressed ‘not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth.’ In No. 2, Mr. Arm-

strong replies that he only is a Christian who believes in Christ, and that he only believes in Christ who regards him as 'The God-man,' &c. Mr. Jones rejoins that the titles applied to Christ are not scriptural, nor borne out by Scripture, and that Mr. A.'s principle would unchristianize many trinitarians and churchmen. Mr. Armstrong returns to the charge in Letter 4, and expounds in a very original way his notion of the right of private judgment. 'It is the right of every man, and his duty also, to exercise his reason upon all propositions submitted to him as a moral and intelligent being ;' but, 'side by side with this truth is a most dangerous principle which many too readily adopt, namely, that a man, by the exercise of his reason alone,—by the employment of his private judgment alone,—can arrive at the truth in religious matters, and ascertain the meaning of the word of God.' He then condemns the liberality which allows that good men may differ widely in opinion. 'Before a man's actions can be good, his principles must be good ; before his principles can be good, they must accord with the doctrines which God teaches ;' and in spirit, though not in words, he distinctly adds, before they accord with those doctrines they must be stretched or cut short to the standard creed of the Reverend Nicholas Armstrong. The letter concludes with a volley of texts, commonly cited on behalf of orthodox tenets, in which he seems to expend his whole stock of ammunition. To these three points, viz., Christian liberality in matters of opinion, the use of reason, and the real meaning of the texts so often cited in this controversy, Mr. Jones devotes the three remaining letters, and he has discussed them very ably and successfully. In particular, the exposition of the Scripture quotations is brief, clear, acute, and convincing. The inconsistency of the positions just cited is also well exhibited. 'He confounds two things perfectly distinct, the power of *unaided reason* to discover the truths of revelation, and the power of reason, *aided* by revelation, to discover all necessary religious truth, or, what is the same thing, the power of man to understand those propositions which God has submitted to him in the Scriptures.' 'Reason is *not* alone and unassisted.' 'If reason cannot interpret the Bible, that holy book is an useless incumbrance.' 'In every instance it is the original revelation that is spoken of as being immediately from heaven, and above the power of reason to reach. A superadded inspiration to understand the revelation is not once contemplated.' Such is the ground which Mr. Jones takes up, and it is unassailable. His logical and scriptural discussions are well set off by the unreasoning and damnable assumption of infallibility which characterizes his opponent. We hope that the publication of this controversy in its present form will do much good, and rejoice to find that its immediate and local effect was to cause a considerable accession of subscribers to the Northampton Unitarian Congregation, and a numerous attendance on the lectures then delivering by its able and zealous minister.

The Miracles of the Irving School shown to be unworthy of serious examination. By the Rev. David Thom. Longman. 1832.

MR. THOM describes a miracle to be 'something wonderful—something out of the ordinary course of things—something which, by the surprising nature of the circumstances connected with it, is deserving of

and likely to command attention.' The question, whether miracles are to be looked for at the present day, he answers, in one sense, yes; in another sense, no. The existence of Christian faith in men's souls, which is, in his view, a supernatural principle, he regards as 'the grand miracle which has existed from the earliest ages until now.' All pretensions to external and physical miracles, and especially those of the Irving school, are, he contends, so inconsistent with scripture, as to deserve no attention. He establishes this point by three arguments: first, that genuine miracles, in the sense in which the term is commonly understood, have always been wrought in proof, and with a view to the establishment of a divine revelation; secondly, the performance of such miracles in the present day would indicate not an advance, but a retrograde motion on the part of the church; and thirdly, we have direct apostolical authority for affirming, that what are commonly regarded as miracles were confined to the first ages of the Christian church.

Scripture Natural History, or a Descriptive account of the Zoology, Botany, and Mineralogy of the Bible. By Wm. Carpenter. Second Edition. London, 1832.

THE multiplication of works of this description, and their publication in a cheap form, afford us great pleasure. They are the best expositions of Scripture, and help to qualify every man to be his own interpreter. Mr. Carpenter has laboured diligently in this department, and endeavoured to disseminate, both from the press and in the lecture-room, the multifarious information which he has amassed. We wish the wood-cuts in this volume had been better executed; but still they are some help to a distinct notion of the forms of the objects described; and altogether, to the great majority of the readers of Scripture, there is nothing of the kind which is at once so easily attainable, and so useful and interesting. We therefore recommend it, and hope that the compiler will be encouraged to pursue, or to resume, his exertions to familiarize the public with whatever knowledge tends to illustrate the Bible.

We were not aware, till the Preface informed us, that this was the Wm. Carpenter who was recently imprisoned for interpreting an act of parliament in the way least hostile to public instruction, whereas it should have been interpreted (and this no doubt is most in conformity with the spirit of its enactment) in the way most hostile to that object. His speedy liberation, and the remission of the penalties and costs, was one of the most graceful acts of the present ministry, so far as the administration of the laws is concerned. We trust it was an earnest of the abrogation of statutes which would disgrace any country making even the humblest pretensions to be civilized, free, and enlightened.

The Humanity of the Righteous. A Sermon in aid of the Association for promoting Rational Humanity towards the Animal Creation.
By the Rev. J. E. Good, of Salisbury. Nisbet.

THERE is much of kind feeling and sensible remark in this sermon. The subject ought to be more frequently adverted to than it is, for no reform can take place but by the co-operation of the teacher and the

legislator. It will be long, we fear, before the nuisance is abated; for it is difficult to reach the minds, or even to restrain the actions, of the class of people who commit it. There is the greater need of persevering effort. Mr. Good has done well to aid. He has borrowed a little from the eloquent Discourse of Dr. Drummond; but the obligation is fairly and honourably acknowledged; and as this sermon will probably be read in a very different circle, we rejoice in the circumstance.

Herbert's Country Parson, Church Porch, &c. London. Washbourne. 1832.

THE very sight of this little book refreshes one's eyes, as its contents content the heart. Welcome is it amid the wranglings of controversy, and sweet as the voice which calls away from noise and contention, toil and trouble, to lie down in green pastures beside the still waters. The church and the world ought to be the better for this very neat and appropriate edition of excellent George Herbert's 'Priest to the Temple, or the Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life.' It is a beautiful picture of a parish priest—so simple, good, and holy. Just two centuries have elapsed from the original publication; but such books never grow old; it seems as fresh as some lowly flower of paradise, just opening in quietness by the side of the river of life, with the dew of heaven upon its petals.

For the sake of those who know not Herbert's 'Country Parson,' we cull a portion of Chap. VII.

‘THE PARSON PREACHING.

‘The country parson preacheth constantly. The pulpit is his joy and his throne. If he at any time intermit, it is either for want of health or against some festival, that he may the better celebrate it; or for the variety of hearers, that he may be heard at his return more attentively. When he preacheth, he procures attention by all possible art; both by earnestness of speech—it being natural to men to think, that where is much earnestness there is somewhat worth hearing—and by a diligent and busy cast of his eyes on his auditors, with letting them know that he marks who observes and who not; and with particularizing of his speech, now to the younger sort, now to the poor, and now to the rich—“this is for you, and this is for you”—for particulars ever touch and awake more than generals. Herein also he serves himself of the judgments of God; as of those of ancient times, so especially of the late ones, and those most which are nearest to his parish; for people are very attentive of such discourses, and think it behoves them to be so when God is so near them, and even over their heads. Sometimes he tells them stories and sayings of others, according as his text invites him; for them also men heed, and remember better than exhortations, which, though earnest, yet often die with the sermon, especially with country people, who are thick and heavy, and hard to raise to a point of zeal and fervency, and need a mountain of fire to kindle them; but stories and sayings they will well remember. By these and other means the parson procures attention; but the character of his sermons is HOLINESS. He is not witty, nor learned, nor eloquent, but HOLY—a character that Hermogenes never dreamed of,

and therefore he could give no precepts thereof. But it is gained, first, by choosing texts of devotion, not controversy; moving and ravishing texts, whereof the Scriptures are full. Secondly, by dipping and seasoning all our words and sentences in our hearts, before they come into our mouths; truly affecting and cordially expressing all that we say, so that the auditors may plainly perceive that every word is heart-deep. Thirdly, by turning often and making many apostrophes to God; as, "O Lord! bless my people, and teach them this point!" or, "O my Master, on whose errand I come, let me hold my peace, and do thou speak thyself, for thou art love; and when thou teachest, all are scholars." Some such irradiations scatteringly in the sermon, carry great holiness in them. The prophets are admirable in this. The parson's method in handling of a text consists of two parts; first, a plain and evident declaration of the meaning of the text; and, secondly, some choice observations drawn out of the whole text, as it lies entire and unbroken in the Scripture itself. This he thinks natural, and sweet, and grave. Whereas, the other way of crumbling a text into small parts (as, the person speaking or spoken to, the subject, and object, and the like) hath neither in it sweetness, nor gravity, nor variety; since the words apart are not scripture, but a dictionary, and may be considered alike in all the scripture. The parson exceeds not an hour in preaching, because all ages have thought that a competency, and he that profits not in that time will less afterward; the same affection which made him not profit before, making him then weary, and so he grows from not relishing to loathing.'—pp. 16-21.

There are thirty-seven chapters like this—in spirit, that is; with Isaac Walton's memoir of Herbert prefixed, and leading us at last to the 'Church Porch.' The following is a fancy, quaint and pretty:—

• THE CHURCH FLOOR.

Mark you the floor? that square and speckled stone,
Which looks so firm and strong,

Is PATIENCE.

And th' other black and grave, wherewith each one
Is chequer'd all along,
HUMILITY.

The gentle rising, which on either hand
Leads to the choir above,
Is CONFIDENCE.

But the sweet cement, which in one sure band
Ties the whole frame, is LOVE
And CHARITY.

Hither sometimes Sin steals, and stains
The marble's neat and curious veins;
But all is cleansed when the marble weeps.
Sometimes Death, puffing at the door,
Blows all the dust about the floor;
But, while he thinks to spoil the room, he sweeps.
Blest be the Architect, whose art
Could build so strong in a weak heart.'—pp. 157, 158.

The Rise and Establishment, in five and twenty years, in the United States of America, of one thousand Unitarian Congregations under the designation of Christians, together with a Detailed Statement and Defence of their Opinions. By Simon Clough. Hunter, London ; Forrest, Manchester.

THIS interesting tract consists of a republication of two pieces by a minister deservedly eminent and esteemed in the Christian denomination. From circumstances explained in the preface, we learn that the statements of numbers and opinions are authoritative, and truly surprising is the fact which they set forth of the formation, within twenty-five years, of above one thousand Unitarian congregations. The date of this document is 1827, and we doubt not that during the last five years a corresponding progress has been made. Nor when we consider the liberal basis on which the Christian church is constructed, do we fear that the rapidity of their increase will be retarded, as a similarly rapid spread has been in the Wesleyan Methodist connexion. What would be the joy of Lindsey, who went forth from his home and his vineyard into a strange and to him barren land, could he witness the mighty growth of Unitarian Christianity in the United States, as learnt by the numbers of the Christians and other details afforded by the Editor! What prophets, if not kings, waited for, our eyes behold, and yet this harvest, our hearts and our minds tell us, is but as the first sheaf offered to the Lord.

We have long wished that to the publication of productions, by the (so called) Unitarians of the United States, by which our body and others in this kingdom have been edified and delighted, some one would add select pieces from the pen of the Christians, the Universalists, and the liberal Quakers. We take the present tract as a pledge as well as a boon. We thank the editor for this, and we ask him for more. There is we know considerable pecuniary risk. But cannot this be rendered inconsiderable to individuals by being divided? and might not the slow returns of the book trade be better endured by a union of several persons than by one? Union is strength;—the apophthegm is true as trite. Therefore, we wish to see the productions of Transatlantic Antitrinitarians republished in this country to as great an extent as possible; and, therefore, we wish most heartily that all Transatlantic Antitrinitarians were banded together in brotherly love and harmonious action. What power would be wielded for good, were the two thousand (and more) Antitrinitarian societies of the United States associated for the promotion of common purposes! It is not so. How long? Grant that there are differences; they are on minor points. Do not all recognize the two fundamental truths of Christianity—the proper unity and essential goodness of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? Suppose the Universalists are not so well educated as the Unitarians. That is their misfortune not their fault, and if a disqualification for one sphere of usefulness, for that very reason it may be qualification for another.

Suppose they have trenched on parochial boundaries and established order,—they have good examples, if we remember right, in Jesus Christ and Martin Luther, and have done no more than the Unitarians of this kingdom have done, and what they were called on to do, by the belief that error prevailed and that they had truth to impart. Suppose that some of them hold that the punishment of the wicked terminates

with this life—which will most speedily correct the error—haughty exclusion or friendly admonition? We suppose that no Unitarian will manifest so pharisaic a spirit as to affirm that the ministers and people of five hundred Christian congregations in a civilized country are not ‘serious’ and worthy of esteem. Why then should a defective education or minor differences exclude the Universalists from the friendly regards of the Unitarians? The reverse would be the case in this country. Our most learned ministers have been the first to join the right hand to humble but worthy fellow labourers, in the conviction, that as each have a work to do, so each may do a work equally acceptable to their common master. And out of the ranks of Universalists some of our churches have received many and those valuable members. There may be in the United States local circumstances which we cannot estimate; but we must say, that they must be very strong ones for us to hold the Transatlantic Unitarians wholly blameless.

POLITICAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND BIOGRAPHY.

The Hill and the Valley, (Illustrations of Political Economy, No. 2.)

By Harriet Martineau. 1s. 6d.

THE reception of the first number of Miss Martineau's projected work has already ascertained its decided success. She has only to hold on in the course she has commenced; it must prove one of high honour and public usefulness. The tale now before us not only answers its avowed purpose well, but various other purposes also; and many valuable lessons may be learned from it, besides those of political economy. Considered merely as a story, it is entitled to no mean rank among works of fiction. Its materials are homely, but they are put together with a power which the writer has not before evinced, and which combines the production of intellectual profit with that of lively interest and strong emotion. Some of the descriptions, and the characters of Armstrong and of Paul, are not unworthy of our most gifted literary artists. It was once said, that the attempt was vain to border the Unitarian controversy with flowers; our author has accomplished what might have been reckoned yet more difficult, and set the doctrine of CAPITAL in a beautiful frame-work of simplicity, taste, and feeling. The tale is well timed; for sad mistakes on the relative importance of labour and capital, and the effects of machinery, are abroad amongst the poor, and few there are qualified, even if disposed, to put them right. Every man of intelligence and benevolence should exert himself to promote its circulation.

There is a slight fault, but it should be amended: the writer is often happy in her figurative titles, but let her beware, lest that felicity lead her into obscurity and affectation.

If properly encouraged, as we feel sure it must be, the beneficial influence of this publication must soon be felt. At a public meeting the other day, while a speaker connected with Spitalfields was urging an application for legislative interference for the protection of the silk-weavers, a voice from the crowd exclaimed, *we want Harriet Martineau here!*

Essay on the Right of Hindoos over Ancestral Property, according to the Law of Bengal, By Rajah Rammohun Roy. Calcutta, 1830; reprinted, London, 1832.

It is only possible for us just to mention this publication; but we cannot allow even the reprint of a legal discussion, by the great reformer of India, to take place in London without recording it in our pages. An early opportunity will happily be afforded us, by the volume of 'Remarks on East India Affairs,' now in the press, to say more of the opinions, views, and wishes of the illustrious author than we could do on the present occasion. In this pamphlet some recent decisions of the civil courts in Bengal, which appear to have the effect of declaring, 'every disposition, by a father, of his ancestral real property, without the sanctions of his sons and grandsons, to be null and void,' are combated with great acuteness and research, and shown to be inconsistent with the previous exposition of the Hindoo law which had always obtained in Bengal, as well as 'with the principles of justice, with reason, or with regard to the future prosperity of the country.' The Rajah is evidently fighting against an evil with which England is not unacquainted, and we hope he may successfully resist its extension in India.

A History of the Italian Republics, with a View of the Origin, Progress, and Fate of Italian Freedom. By J. C. L. De Sismondi (Vol. 27 of Dr. Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopaedia.)

A book full of instruction and of feeling; most delightful yet most painful; and to be read by all who care for fact or for theory; for politics or for poetry; for the past or the future. It was a bold and happy thought of Dr. Lardner's, that of asking from Sismondi, who has produced so many on the subject, a single volume on the republics of Italy. Never was a volume of history so instinct with life. The author came to his subject in every way pre-eminently qualified to give it interest—his mind, memory, and heart, all full of it. His knowledge extensive and accurate, his research profound, his principles elevated, his style clear and pure, his feelings ardent, and his expression eloquent;—there is nothing to desiderate, either for the author or the subject, unless it be that he may yet live to witness and record the resurrection of that liberty of which he has described the destruction and pronounced the funeral eulogy.

The Annual Biography and Obituary. Longman. 1832.

SIXTEEN volumes of this work show that the public have an interest in it, and that its general plan and execution are not unsatisfactory. The latter might be improved; though it would be unreasonable to expect the pains to be taken, or the power to be employed, on an annual volume, including so many subjects, which may be demanded for the higher pretensions of the permanent biographical record of an illustrious individual. The purpose is sufficiently answered if we have a tolerably complete view of the extent to which, within the preceding year, Death has transferred to his own dominions those who by their virtues or vices, their talents, station, acquirements, or adventures, had made themselves conspicuous here. We can afford to wait for the more

minute accuracy of the chronicler, and the *post mortem* investigations of the philosophical dissector of character. We thank the publishers, therefore, for giving us just as much as, at the time, we want and they can obtain for us.

The present volume contains thirty-one lives ‘of celebrated persons who have died within the years 1830—1831,’ together with ‘A General Biographical List’ of the *sidera minora* which have become extinct during that period.

The latter are taken, with some retrenchment, from the obituary department of the various periodicals of the year. They are not the worse for such retrenchment. The moral and religious reflections which naturally occur on the decease of an individual who is known to us, must needs be much the same as the reflections which occur to the minds of others on the loss of *their* friends. Presented to those who are mourning, or to a small congregation where death is an event comparatively infrequent, they are likely to have a salutary effect. The case is different when the record is printed in the same pages with several others; and when, from one record to another, and from month to month, or from week to week, the same topics are repeated with little variation. Those who read them (and if not to be read, why are they there?) are likely to have the impression worn out of their minds, and to feel that what, in its singleness and appropriateness, was solemn, by its commonness becomes merely wearisome. A want of proportion is another evil which attends the present plan of obituary writing. Our friend or relative, merely endured, in life and death, the common lot; but his common lot is more to us than the extraordinary lot of others, and so we tell *our* nothing with the impressive manner of one who has something to recount. The power of example is impaired; for regret must eulogize, and the eulogy which may be most just in every particular instance acquires an indiscriminate and unmeaning appearance by the very fact of its frequency. Happily the practice is going out, of every death in a congregation being followed by a funeral sermon, with a full-length character of the deceased. The custom was, however, not at all more inexpedient than the analogous one, which has prevailed so long in the obituary departments of religious periodicals.

EDUCATION.

Geological Sketches, and Glimpses of the Ancient Earth. By Maria Hack. London. Harvey and Darton.

We are often inclined to dispute with Mrs. Hack on the question of *manner*, but on that of the *matter* of her juvenile books we have scarcely a fault to find. The most praiseworthy diligence, the most indefatigable exactness, the most cautious forbearance on doubtful points, distinguish all such of her productions as have met our eyes. Of these, decidedly the least pleasing, and, we are disposed to think, the least judicious, are her histories. Her plan of writing history is liable to many objections, and especially to that which, more or less, may be applied to all her works, namely, the constant interposition of a parent's commentary upon every fact presented to the mind of a child. We are aware that, in the eyes of many teachers, this will be regarded as a beauty, not a defect; but we would beseech them to

consider, whether, because a pupil's head is filled with the wisdom of others, and his mind saved the labour of thought for itself, he will be the more wise and well-judging; whether he will not, in short, be a mere puppet in the hands of his teachers? It is true, that, in defiance of the system of literalism in which he has been brought up, Harry Beaufoy, in the present work, quotes poetry with an ardour and enthusiasm which startles his father, and might confound a Necessarian, but we cannot help regarding this result as unnatural.

The hero's age (fifteen) is also, we think, too advanced, for the general tenour of his remarks, which are more like the prattle of an inquiring child of nine or ten; and the respected author is mistaken if she conceives that the extent of his learning in one direction is an equivalent for the absence of all information on another. On the contrary, it does but render the childish tone in which he addresses, and is addressed by his parents, a more striking contrast. It is possible, indeed, that a youth of fifteen, chiefly conversant with books, might, through neglect of the powers of observation, have remained in ignorance of the existence of fossils in a neighbouring chalk-pit; but from one who has made his reading so much his own, and displays such quickness and aptitude of application, as Harry Beaufoy, we should surely have expected some notions, however vague, respecting the changes of the earth, and the existence of fossil remains; so also should we have looked for rather better acquaintance with the fate of Galileo*.

Having ventured to make these objections, we come with much greater pleasure to the subject of the merits of the book. Both the arrangement and execution have much delighted us. Mrs. Hack has not only great information and accuracy, but a most happy talent of selection. She has brought together nothing either irrelevant to her purpose, or far-fetched or dreamy; but out of well-attested facts has contrived to make a most interesting, for ourselves we would say, even *fascinating*, book. Its power of seizing the attention of the young, however, owes nothing to the conversational form adopted, while the childish appearance given by that form may deter older readers, who otherwise would find in it much valuable and interesting information. The space allotted to volcanoes and earthquakes appears to us rather disproportioned to the extent of the volume, when compared with that assigned to mineral productions and animal remains,—far more extensive, if not more interesting subjects of inquiry. We shall make no quotations from Mrs. Hack's work, which, with the exceptions above recorded, we much admire, and heartily recommend.

An Outline of English History. (For the use of Schools.) By Henry Ince. Gilbert, London. Batcheller, Dover.

THIS unpretending little book is what it professes to be, and performs what it promises. It is a good outline; and may be advantageously used by pupils to methodize and arrange the information which they obtain from histories, stories, biography, and other sources; or better still perhaps, by the teacher, as containing, in each reign, the heads of a lecture, which, if he well fills up, will not be surpassed, in the interest it excites, by any instruction which he can bestow.

* See p. 41.

The Phenomena of Nature familiarly explained. A book for Parents and Instructors, and especially adapted to Schools. Translated from the German of Wilhelm von Türk. Wilson. 1832.

THE translator's hope is amply warranted, 'that, in producing this useful little work in a new dress, a valuable addition has been made to the juvenile literature of England.' For its peculiar purpose, we know of no book so valuable. The author's object was 'to present actual appearances in the language of children, to enlarge their ideas, to give them clear impressions of the properties belonging to objects in nature, and to teach them the relation between cause and effect.' This is done by a series of dialogues on bodies, and their properties in general: earth and its nature, water and the phenomena pertaining to it, air, fire and heat, light, and celestial bodies, with their phenomena. The interlocutors are a master and child; the objects themselves are supposed to be employed, whenever practicable; and directions are given for a number of simple illustrative experiments, which are presumed to be repeated. The best of teachers, in conducting the best of educations, will find this book one of the best of helps. It is a treasure for the intelligent parent or instructor, who wishes to impart an acquaintance with things and not merely with words, and who would rather exercise the intellect than load the memory.

The Christian Child's Faithful Friend, and Sabbath Companion.
Vol. IV. Hunter. 1831.

ON the completion of another volume of this penny-a-month periodical, we congratulate the conductors on having persevered in their course of quiet and unassuming usefulness, uninterrupted, though not unassailed, aiming, in the spirit of their Master, to bless the young. A series of articles, entitled 'Useful Knowledge,' particularly deserves commendation.

Facilis, Celera, Certa; or, an Attempt to render the Art of Short-hand Writing more easy to be acquired, and of more ready application. London. Taylor.

THE author seems to us to have accomplished the *Facilis* and *Celera*, but we cannot so confidently certify the *Certa*. All inventors of stenographic systems have been in straits betwixt rapidity and readability. They have been compelled to sacrifice the one or the other, or to content themselves with both in a lower degree than might have been attained of either. The combination is not essential. Short-hand is used for two very different purposes, and we have only to select a system adapted to the purpose for which it is to be employed. Schemes distinguished for the celerity with which they may be written recommend themselves to the reporter, and as his notes are immediately written out for use, subsequent legibility is of little consequence. For memoranda, extracts, journals, &c., a permanently and easily legible short-hand is to be preferred; and as one may be soon found which, together with this quality, moves at what, compared with the pace of a common running hand, is as the ten-mile-an-hour trot of a well-horsed mail-coach, there is no occasion to regret that it is not the rail-road rate of a reporter's pen. Our author's plan leans most towards the rapidity; but he has aimed at the combination of both by adopting 'determinate modes of abbreviation, according with the principles of the English language.'

We class this publication among books of education, for every young person ought to learn some system of short-hand. Its conveniences are manifold. The characters now employed, both in writing and printing, waste a great deal of time, besides ink and paper, and might be exchanged for others which would reduce books to a small fraction of their present size, and yet leave them quite as intelligible and much more beautiful.

POETRY.

Britain's Historical Drama; a Series of National Tragedies, intended to illustrate the Manners, Customs, and Religious Institutions of different early eras in Britain. By J. F. Pennie. Maunder. 1832.

MR. PENNIE is the author of some poems on sacred subjects, (the Royal Minstrel, and Scenes in Palestine,) which, if they have not excited much public attention, have yet obtained for him the honourable approval of some, in whose poetical judgment the public places deserved confidence. The first-named production is described by Professor Milman as displaying ‘great power and still greater promise;’ and the latter is characterized by the Rev. L. Bowles as the work of ‘an author of great and original genius.’ The plan of the volume before us is new; and if the execution be not perfect, we must add that many of the most obvious and formidable difficulties of the undertaking have been overcome with surprising facility. Many of the peculiar opinions, customs, and rites of the ancient Britons and the Anglo-Saxons are wrought out in these dramas very naturally and pictorially. In pursuing his plan, we should be glad if the author would endeavour to give us more of the interior of humble life; if he would be more on his guard against throwing back upon past ages any of the sentiments or usages which had not then arisen; and, by a deeper study into the philosophy of human character, preserve more strictly the verisimilitude and consistency of the persons whom he introduces; and we doubt not that he will, for he has evidently plenty of vigour and of diligence. The allusions in the text, and the citations in the notes, show that he has studied the antiquarian part of his task with exemplary perseverance; and the spirit of his dialogue and versification is of the true dramatic order. His plays would act well; and that is almost the last praise which the announcement of their design made us expect we should have occasion to bestow. If appropriately got up, their representation would be by no means deficient in dramatic interest, while it would also furnish an excellent series of lectures on history.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the transfer of our religious intelligence to the ‘Unitarian Chronicle and Companion to the Monthly Repository,’ we have again occasion to apologize to our Correspondents for delays in the use of their communications, which we cannot avoid.

We beg to direct the attention of our readers to the publication on the Punishment of Death, of which a specimen is stitched up with our present number. We intend soon to devote some of our pages to this most important topic, as well as to that of prison discipline.

In reply to several applications, we can only say that at present we cannot enter into the arrangements proposed to us.

We must respectfully decline ‘The Five Justifications;’ the hints in the author’s letter shall be duly considered. T. F. B. next month. C. came too late: we very much approve his plan, and shall call attention to it.